AUGUST/SEFTEMBER 2013 Niall Horan How life and love inspired The Show Jacob Collier The world's next great musical genius Loreen **Bad Bunny Hayley Atwell** Janelle Monae Margot Robbie Greta Gerwig Mahalia Jungle WHO S NCUTI GATWA The Doctor is ready to talk Barbie, Sex Education and why he's the perfect choice to play the BBC's iconic Time Lord



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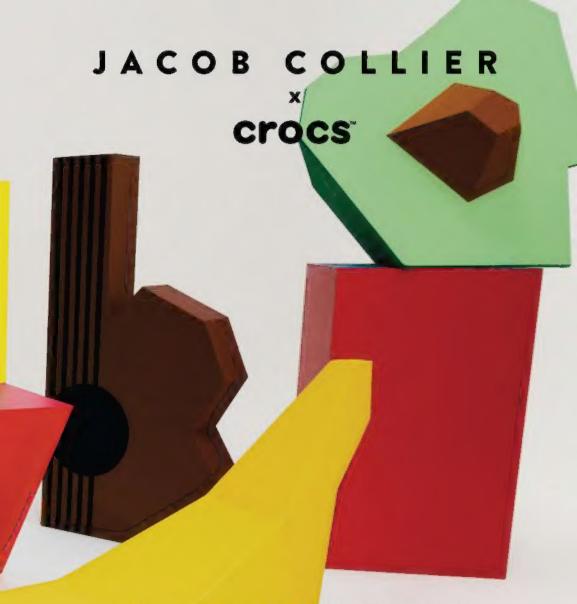


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Jacob Collier

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swatch



BIG BOLD

Editor's Letter

Making TV history: Doctor Who's first Black Time Lord



SINCE DOCTOR WHO undoubtedly the BBC's most famous franchise - was first broadcast on television 60 years ago, the time-trave-ling alien has appeared in many forms. Originally played by a 55-year-old white male actor. William Harmell, the Doctor has - so far - been recast 13 times, portrayed perhaps most famously by Tom Baker (aged 40 at the time) and more recently by David Tennant (then aged 34). before a 35-year-old Jodie Whittaker took control of the TARDIS in 2017 as the first femule Doctor

Since its 'reboot' in 2005, the series has garnered an entirely new generation of fans kids and adults alike - and become a global phenomenon. As is common with cult franchise shows from Star Wars to Star Trek, each change of lead has either been Joyously embraced or furiously derided (or is it just an angry sel-fi troll thing?).

As the series prepares to enter a new era, spear-headed by fan-favourite writer Russel. T Davies, this issue's cover star Neuti Gatwa is stepping up as the new Time Lord. Where Jodie had to fend off misogynistic criticism that the continually regenerating Doctor could possibly be re-imagine, as a woman, Gatwa has been subject to dijections over whether the about from the planet Gallifrey located in a binary star system 250 million light years from Earth could be a Black person.

in a similar situation, speaking about why he stepped away from the idea that he could play James Bond, Idr & P.ba recently commented on the backlash against a fictional character being played by a person that wasn't a white man, "Those that weren't happy about the dea made the whole tinged sgusting and off putting, because it became about race," he told the SmartLess podcast. "It became about nonsense and I got the brunt of it."

Diversity is more than just a buzz word about representing the reality of the world we live at Costing people in rules that challenge and change our experience of a character reinvigorates decades-old franchises that otherwise run the risk of becoming repellitive and stale. Finding new ways of presenting these characters is not a fick-hox exercise, if allows producers and writers to introduce fresh dimensions and perspectives to a familiar story. How many times do you want the same parrative sold back to you. In the same form?

it's also worth remembering that history has not been erased. If you're the kind of person who likes beans on toast for dinner every day and wants to holiday in the same place every summer, those earlier films and television episodes still exist for you to be envoyed on repeat

I'd like to think most people have more adventurous tastes and hunger for new experiences in life. I for one am excited to see what Davies and Gatwa bring out of the TARDIS and onto the screen.



ON THE COVER



CREATIVE DIRECTION BY JOREPH-

- NOV! WEARS WINE BY WARRI



OREATISE CONFESSION AND STYLING PE



CREATIVE DIRECTION BY IDECTH

STYLING BY LAMERON QUITTNEP



Contributors

INSIDE THE COVER



Alison Rumfitt

In 2020, in a fit of lockdown

reason it touched a cultural

merve - trans literature was

growing in prominence, as

Was transphoble, it's odd to

a painful moment. I'd quite-

like to be a genra writer but

also can't stop writing about

stuff the appres me. I've been

working as a fantally surjest

featuring enthropomorphic enimals akin to Rechialt.

Unfortunately, even that is

about things that scare me. 'd

Who is a perfect example of this

- oan provide us with a way to

understand the things we can't

feel irresponsible if wasn't.

Genra storytelling Doctor

beer to look at

have your carear tied to such

loopiness. I wrote a novel. Tell

Ma t'm Worthless. For wherever

William Around

Photographer





Felicity Key

Whether I'm styling a shoot or calabrity client's press bour, my approach is very research-heavy have a tendency to spend far too long moodboarding Delving into ald photography and films, I'll append hours looking for the parfect reference. Though my recent work has mainly been rad-parpa styling, I spent the majority of my career in magazinas. This background still influences me. I like to approach press tours with an editorial mindset, I'm always looking for a common thread the will see the looks agether But ultimately my melh goal is to incorporate my altert's voice and seathetic in every outfit. The best redcurpet looks tall you something about who the telent is.



Azezei

Photographer

Each project work on resonates with a part of me. love working with musicions because. Iger/hat you can have a really deep artistic exchange with them on set upreen was genuine and open to trying new things Working with her was a great experience that allowed my team and I to experiment with righting and shodows. It was a short that ran amouthly, thenks to humour and a little craziness. It's been go unpredictable, impressive arc.



Cliff Joennou

Alsa Hambis

Nick Reilly Laurène Pineau-Taylor

Joseph Kocharlan

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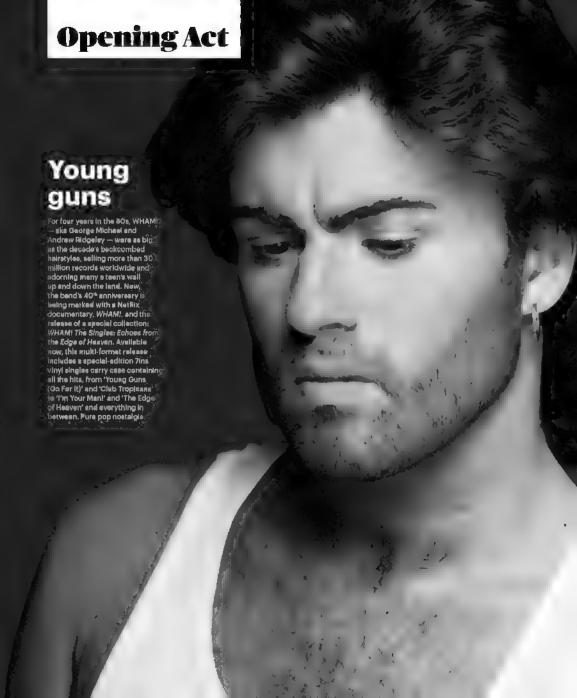
Hawaii style

Wahine, a new fashion brand founded by akater, actor and model Evan Mock is a love letter to his home. Hawait, and its women. A firm favourite with the fashion world, Mook has starred in style campaigns and attends catwalk shows, and it is clear he knows what he's doing all by himself, too. Riding the inspiration wave of surf and skate culture, which is woven into-Hawsii's DNA, Wahina calebrates the island. of the Gossib Girl star's birth. It offers a cool. oursted calketian of clothes to choose from including alogen shirts, caps, varsity tackets and tops, boxers, restiguard tops, worker trousors, sleeveless yests and gilets. You know we love it xoxo.

WAHINE SHOP

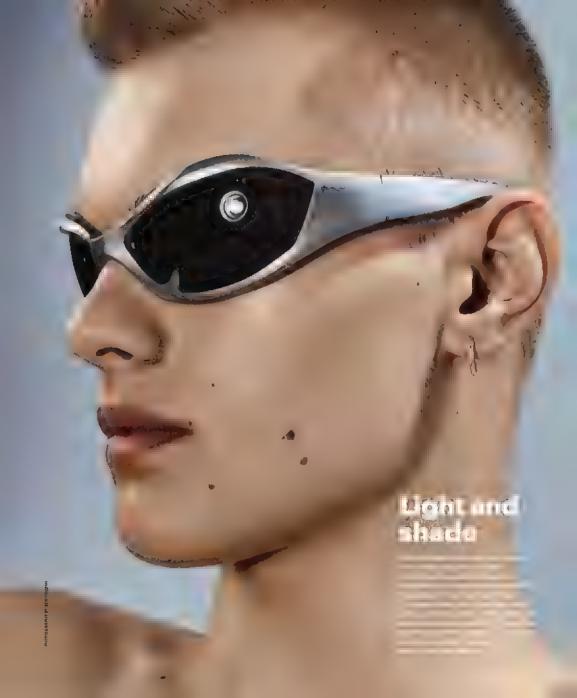
NY BOYFRIEND OUT OF TOWN







Opening Act Beatlemania by McCartney is revielting Beatlemania from an entirely freeh prespective — that of Paul MoCarthey The Lyes of the Storm exhibition see Ma-is own photographs from that era for the very first time, offering a unique look at the most influential band ever. Concentrating on the early years of 1963-64, the archive delivers a powerful insight into the year that culminated in The Beatles famously performing to 73 million Americans on The Ed Sullivan Show. Get ready o catch Beatlemania all over again. 20 Molling Money / August / September 2023





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The Mix

This a Borland Tuesday right in June, and if find myself at Oslo, on infimate verme in deepest east London where the ice in the drinus is melting at a rate that makes Earth's polar toe caps look positively tortoise-like

In the middle of this swellering scene, the crowd are decked out in a variety of straw hats, extravagant floral crowns and flowing white tops. There would be something quaint about the pastora display, were it not for the fact that the outhis seem eerily reminiscent of those worn by the grinning loons who condemned Florence Pugh and Christopher Lee to their respective grisly ends in Midsommar and The Wicker Man.

Bu, rest easy, I write this dispatch hours later, with my life firmly inter and taving avoided so much as a single mendon of the dreaded words 'funeral pyre' instead, the ansetding scene is the work of The Last Dipner Party who are the most exciting British band to have emerged in 2023

The group, who arrived in Apri, with the artrock bombast of first single "Norhing Matters", one of the great debut tracks of our timen, anashaneary revel in the frentness of twe masses it means that tonight's crowd have been asked to wear outfits following a theme of folk-horror

and large swather of those in attendance have apply followed suft. Similarly, an early gig in Camden saw their lans coming taxedos and ball sowns for a hight at the open.

"Welcome to our little rituati," comes the mildly disconcerting introduction from lead singer Abiguil Morris, decked out in a mession, crown of thorus. The rest of the all-femate five-niece have admirably and from the top in their outfits too, with lead granarist Ently Roberts standing out in a blood-stained top.

"We fike to go between the grotesque and he begint fig. - I blink that's out whole, it do of, ethos," explains basist Georgia Davies. "We want to keep cultivating that the idea of somewhere where you can dress up and be extravagant and over the top and not feel restricted by being too cool or too reserved. We want to create a con munify where flamboyance is expected."

"We're very proud that that's our audience," adds Morris.

This sense of community is already working wonders.

"We saw a journalist at one of our early gigs who turned up in Jeans and a Tishirt, went to the loo and re-emerged in a ball gown. That was arraying," Davies adds

It's an extravagance reflected in their own music too. There are shades of early Kate Bush in the commanding presence of Morris, while their sound takes in everything from the frenetic highs of Sparks to a touch of barroque pop.

The group began life when Morris, Davles and guitarist Lizzle Mayland met at university in London and spent their time watching cult south London acts such as Back Midi and HMLTD. They after became friends with Roberts and Aurora Nischevi (keys), who completed the group's line-up.







Their close bond becomes inmediately clear during our interview At one point, when discussing their gigs, both Nischev and Davies mention the group's "live energy" at precisely the same moment 1.5 like the feted chematic ideal of Anishing each other's sentences, but for them it's very rea.

"It's freaky that it happens almost every time we're together. We'l Just say something at the same time and it literally happens so often," Morris adds

These close ties have also anowed the group to enjoy an openness that's key for a band making waves and tentative steps in a notoriously volatile adustry

"It helps that we were friends before because we're never intimidated by each other. Whether, that's having an opinion or an idea about how we can change a song," Davies explains.

The strategy is clearly working wonders. While Nothing Matters' may have seen the group receive widespread acclaim and even a message of congratulation from Garbage's Shirley Manson, brief snapshots of their other materia, proves that he song was no flash in the pan

The next single 'Sinner' revers in new-wave gutters and sounds like the soundtrack to a bacchandalo oxyg in old Soho, while other songs at their live show prove they're calable of pulling out moments of stadium-primed, bands-in-the-air validaty too.

They've been working on hose songs with James Ford—the Arctic Monkeys producer who for the most part seems to be in possession of a mixing desk blessed by King Midas himself. The wast Dinner Party look sure to continue his sensational hot streak.

"I think I can speak for al. of as when I say he's the best person we've ever worked with musically," says Morris of collaborating with Ford on the songs that the band are yet to tuve!.

"He's so talented, but he's so kind and so calm that you don't feel like you're in a room with this big producer who's going to take over the session



and make it his own thing. You just feel like you're with someone who really cares about what you're doing, believes in you and is just there to elevate your muste."

Adds Davies, "There was no ego, it was just adding what we had already done and giving it a sense of a bit more, a little bit more syn h in places and a little more organ."

Stil., the presence of a big name like Ford is one of the things that has seen the group lading anexpected and unfair criticism. Detractors say that he super-producer's involvement and sharing the same management as acts like Metallica is proof that the band is an 'industry plant.'

The oblique phrase, which emerged on social media, is somewhat hard to pinpoint, but it's used by critics who believe that the shimmering brilliance of their debut single can't have happened on its own. They are convinced that The Last Dinner Party "must" have been cooked up in a lab by a record labe, executive whose eyes have long since been replaced by dollar bills.

The reality is that those friendships brough them logether, with the group previously describing the criticism as a "nasty ite"

"It felt inevitable, we know enough about the mister industry to know how people are perceived, and because we came out fully formed and with such a clear vision, I think it immediately put some people's backs up because they expect an unrealistic trajectory for a band to not come out fully formed," explains Morris

"Froit the start, we were so an influes and described to that out as a clear musical vision that perhaps we ended up took ing too put together. No one says that about Yard Act or Sports Team, who are on the same tabel as us."

"There's no shade and we love them, but they were Pahirts and Jeans and the like, well, we dress ourselves too, but it's Jast it shift, my that people seem to see young, nicely put-together women who can also play their instruments and assume it can't be real."

Chi ping in. Nischevi adds: "We know we're tucky to be on a label and we've never hidden from that "

Instead, the band are keen to just let shelr music do the talking. The ristuming Gastonbury debut saw them attracting a packed tent on the Woodsles Stage, while the rest of 2023 will see thore reseases, their own headline tow and the chance to hit, he road with Joxler, too. A debut album is expected to arrive at some poin, next year.

"We have so much range in the music and in the genres that we do, and we don't wan, to be pigeonholed into one style," insists Morris. "We don't want everyone to think 'Oh, The Last Dinnier Parry Just means, like, a corset and a big sidri! It's boring Just to do continuous themes in our styles and music 2023, 2024 and 2025 are going to be massive for us, but then I'm going to work on a fartin," Morris jokingly concedes.

Maybe those Wicker Man comparisons aren't so far removed from reality after all., Necessary



Picture Parlour

Debut single Norwegian Wood' from newcomers Picture Parlour goes far in proving why they're being touted as one of this year's most promising acts. The single sees ringer Katherine Parlour delivering an emotionally raw confersion to a joyed one Parjour's distinctive venals and the group's full-bodied instrumentation shows they're on a path to carving a sound that is entirely their own

Grove

When the coronation beckoned in May, there

in the excessive pomp and pageantry instead. the unrepentent Big Boots' producer and MC offered a swift riposte o the monarchy. "We're told that there's no money for people and public services. but there is £1 million. for the coronation for a hillioname," said Grove at the time

Stella Explorer

On recen EP Thailost Kingdom' Swedish ster Stells Explorer offered up warm synths and atherworldly soundscapes that allowed listeners to escape the humdrum of everyday life. Of the record, she says cryptically: "The Lost

you need it to. It's my pass and my future. I's neture."

Kid Brumawick

Kird Brummylok jooks set to became a Gen-2 rook haro, albeit with a sound that is just as indebted to modern dreats such as Travia Spott and Playbox Carti. His latest EP The Fell: Part 1' is an effortiese melding of anena-sized riffs, trap beats and an tresstible sound.

May

Recent track 'Phone Me sees newcomer May employing hyperpop and glitchy instrumentation to explore the issue of our ever-increasing screentime. "The track expresses frustrations

being to technology, a habit or to a person," she says.

James Smith

Haying sold out shows at London's Omegra and Dingwalls, James Smith re already riding the wave of burgeoning oult sterdom. Gigs at pubs and glubs defined his ceanage years, before a DIY studio et home allowed him to hall down his sound. Recent track Introverted proves the perfect. introduction.

866 B86

By her own admission. Danish songwriter Ernma Grankvist makes music "for the introvert. who is constantly pushed into the uncomfortable extravent way of how the world works" Her uppoming second album She Rex is the perfect reflection of this. With Grankwist's stark honesty paired edeinst indie end alt pop sounds.

Emmeline

Emmeline is already proving a steady hand In delivering songs that offer a wietful look back at the apataloic panas that we all experience from time to time. "My second EP. 'Small-Town Girls and Soft Summer Nights is received in the Yorkshire. hilfudes - that place of my adolescence and fevered dreaming," вћо заув.

Welsh musician Ren's videa of his recent single 'Hi Ren scored more than 14 million views on YouTube. The striking visusi — which sees him in a wheelphair - offers a powerful Insight into his own. experiences with Lyme disease and psychosis. "My illness drives me, because it gives me shorter windows when can create, and I'm determined to use them." he told Rolling Stone JK





Come On, Barbie, Let's Go Party

Greta Gerwig, Margot Robbie, Mark Ronson, and others dish on the film's all-star soundtrack

By BRITTANY SPANOS

ASBIE OPENS with the world's favor rite doll lavying the perfect tary she has her perfect world full of other perfect. Barbles who may look and dress of flerer-ly but act exactly the same. And there's the doting love of iten whose existence is mostly an accessory to Barble's. The next day, it amgoes terribly, terribly wrong. Soundtracking it is "Pink," by Lizzo, a song that describes exactly what Barble is experiencing onacreen a carriery touch of SOs Ty tropes to build out her pastel world.

"Lizzo's yrics are just so funny," says main Barble Margot Robble "and add an extra layer of comedy that I thought was quite genius."

The Barble soundtrack is one of the most important weapons in writer-director Greta Gerwig's arsenal. Many of the film's scenes have righly specific musical cues that the was seeking, which means she needed a team on board from the start to make the vision come allee.

"You're hearing syries that are responding to what's happening onscreen, so the music became more than just music – it became a device to enhance what the audience was watching and experiencing, and got to be the voice of the audience "adds Robbie."

At antic nabbed the project early, working closely with Gerwig and her co-writer justified, Nosh Businiach

"This was a really competitive project in our landscape, but we've been tracking Barbie for a long time," says Kevin Weaver, Atlantic Records! West Coast president The abel was a particiarily strong partner for this project, having down nated the sound rack Harket over the past several years, thinks to albums for Robble's Sucide Squad and Birds of Prey, as well as the Fast and the Furious franchise and the recent Datas Jones & He Six.

The Barbie team knew they needed two songs in particular as soon as possible a showstopping pop number for a highly choreographed dance scene, and a big 80s-style power ba-ad for Ken, played by Ryan Coether.

That was when Oscar-

and seven time Grammy Award withing producer and songwriter Mark Ronson (A Star Is Barn) got a text from his music-supervisor pol George Drakoultas. "Barble?" Is all t said Ronson Zoomed with the Barble aquad while they were in the UK prepping for production. They told him they needed at least the basis of a song for the showstopper in two weeks.

"I don't read a lot of scripts, but it was just every, bing I want in a movie." Ronson recalls. "I was like, If I don't get this gig, I his is gonna be my lavourte movie of the year."

Along with collaborator Andrew Wyatt, the pair cooked up the sea to the disco dance-floor burner Dance the Night', based off a play is of kongs Gerwig had put together for them. Lucklly, Gerwig loved what they sent her

"We did all our dance rehearsals to the beat of the song before the lyrics were overlaid on top," Robbite recalls. "It became the Barrie authern on set. The dance rehearsaline was rearly the first opportunity for all the actors playing Barbles to bond and make riends."

Disco felt like the perfect reference point for what Barble experiences, especially after she steps into the real world. As Gerwig told Robber-"Disco comes with the assure pilor that people want to dance and have a good time. It didn't realise it stopped being cool in the 70s. Disco had no idea, people started listering to punk rock. Disco is affi. there, in bel. bottoms, doing us thing."

Dance the Night', which was written for fellow Borter star Dua Upa to perform, is intrinsic to the DNA of the Illm, according to Weaver But Ronson and Weat

also became integral to the story together, the twosome composed an origina, score for the movie, and Ronson serves as executive producer for the soundirack. Over nearly a full year, Ronson was tasked with helping



curate songs that perfectly matched what Gerwig had envisioned. The soundtrack came together fast as the movie did: working in step and feeding into one another.

"Gerwig' had a vision for a really diverse and unique world that she was creating," Brandon Davis, executive VP and co-read of pup A&R at Atlanue expua ns. "That's why you're bearing, for instance a Kerol G record that leans more reggaeton next to a Borning Fike record that's a nod to Sugar Ray "

As Barbie was being edied, Ronsor and Gerwig got (10) he habit of showing scenes from the film o a new art stion their wish is, each week

"Everybody would watch the scene and come back a week or two weeks later, and got exactly to the heart of everything

we were try rg to do," Ronson says

"I've always really liked singing about cars," she says "For me, here is this inurinsic link between driving and music and feeling like you're a star when you're in a car."

She wanted 'Speed Drive', where she flos Tont Basil's Mickey for the chorus, to "feet guite bratty" and "about last neing hot"

As for the aforementioned Aqua sone ans were ou raged when the Danish group told the press ast year that heir 997 pop hit whale not be featured in the film. Even hough it wasn in the script. Gerwig's plan all along was to find a place for it, especia, y since Robbie and others were begging for it

", was ke, 'Greta how are we going to incorporate this song? We can t do a Barble movie and not

> have a god to Aqua's 'Barble Girl' It has to be in there.' And (Greta) was lke, 'Don't worry we're going to find a



Pink:

Dance the Night' Discrete in

Barble World' Nick Mino, and lea Saler

> **Speed Drive** Char KCX

Wateti' Rater Offent Afric Rat line

'TBA'

7. Journey to the Real World' form treatle

'Dry Junt Ken' Pynt Coulled

'Hey Blondle'

Openiale File

'Home' h ofer

11. 'TBA'

12. 'Forever & Again' The Kid Lardi

13. R allet

> **Butterflice** Dayle

Fighter' Aug Mart

'Barble Oreame'

'Bliver Platter' SE. 'Angel' Plnk or recess 10.

> 146 Choose Your

Pring turby from kinds

For Ronson the music maestro. getting he queen of the Barbz to rapover an extended version of 'Barble Girli seemed like a no-brainer "I feel like people have been asking Nicki to rhyme over some version of Barble Gir, for 15 years

gow," Ronson says As for Ice Spice, it was almost impossible to pin down the extremely in-

Barbje Girl ? Nicki Minat and

ice Spice 1 was like Together?

Are you lok, 1g?!' I flist knew

immediately that all my girlirlends

were going to lose their minds!

Having now spent he better part of a year in Barble's world Ronson still isn't ready to leave "This movie is ac fisanely goodpoliting and visually captivaling." he says, "You could just pease on the most random shot anywhere in this film and stare at it like it was a painting in the Louvre for an hour because there's a thousand shades of pink "

demand rapper. She was due at the

studio earlier in the day to lay down.

her verses but couldni make it and

after midnight Ronson, who was

already getting ready for bed "like

an old guy" ended up biking back to

the studio in the middle of the night

out time in a chazy year to make the

"wild and raucous" track "Wa.ati"

She was the musical gues, on SNL

merely six hours after sitting in

Ronson's studio watching scenes

from Barbie, PlnkPantheress may

nor have owned any Barbies as a

idd ("Only because my morn didn").

get then: for me " she shareso, par-

she studied Gerwig's himography

when she was in school, since she

dreamed of becoming an actress

prior to pursuing music. She was

thrilled at the prospect of working

with the director, which inspired

the sound of the wistful 'Angel

Karoi G also made sure to carve

to make it happen.

When he began the endeavour. Ronson bough, an assortment of Barbies from Toys R 18 and placed them around his studio (as well, as some Kens that Mattel had to send him because he couldn's find them in stores anywhere). As his work on the fian was ending.

> he became a first-time dad to a baby gir.. 🐠



old, for a cruise-so-platen show (She ended up winning.) "My parents were like, Oh, my God No 'They were really wortled that was going to ger all on the stage and cry, and it would be a disaster," she explains, "But I was adamant hat a wanted to do it. I just sang it on the interophone with new music the whole song and I won the contest." Ronson and Gerwig gave Charli

XCX a few scenes to pick from, but pob's foremost lover of car anthems was hooked on the chase scene, and ended up penning 'Speed Drive'.





HEN LIL WAYNE 10ps on Zoom one recent afternoon, he's on a cour bus ao California between stops on his Welcome to Tha Carter Tout, where he's been performing at more nitimate venues to better engage his fans. Even with his Grammy Awards, platin am piaques, and a claim to rap GOAT status, he says that he has "so far" to go until, he's satisfied.

"The true artists and pioneers, they never retire," Wayne, 40, tells me, noting that he has no plans to stop rhyming. He's been

Lil Wayne

The rapper on staying motivated, wanting to play the Super Bowl, and why he'll be working forever

By ANDRE GEE

locked in the studio nearly every day for almost three decades now building a catalogue of songs so expansive that he can't even try to estimate he size of it. He recently finalised ColleGrove 2, a sequel to his 2016 collaboration a.b.m with 2 Chainz: they're waiting for sample clearances before it's reseased. Wayne is mum on Carter VI, he latest entry in his flagship a.b.um series, but his

February kant Nobody single with Switz Beatz (and DMX voca, samples) indicates that he s been working on that as well. This year marks the 15th and versary of his star-maxing Carter III album (which he's celebrating with a vinyl release), but Wayne teels me it's not a big deal to him he's oo focused on recording his next set of rityings.

How do you view The Carter III 15 years later? What role do you feel that project plays in your catalogue?

I'm going to be so honest with you: I don't know Tha Carter RI, The Carter U. The Carter One from The Carter IV And that's just my God's honest truth You could lie. you could ask me [about] such and such song, I wouldn't even know what we taking about So it holds no significance to me at al.,

Even with the highs and firsts you had in 2008, It's not any different to you?

Nah. I don't even know if that's when The Correr (II come our Thar's how much I don't know. I work every day, bro every single day. And also, I always look at it as the curse part of the gift and the curse. I believe that God I biessed me with his amorning mind, but would not give [me an amazing memory to remember this amazing shit

So you have The Carter series. plus mixtapes like The Drought. The Dedication, No Cellings, Sorry 4 the Walt - a lot of different project series. How do you differentiate creatively? As of them have their own approach. If it's a The Correr song, Lapproach It with a Carter-song effect. Some mixtages til rhyme over all the sones that are recently out. hat are hot songs. And Lapproach hose the same way the originaartist approached them. I hust say different words. If it's a mostage with DJ Drama, then , know Drama's going to want a jot of original songs Bu the way Lapproach those, I say whatever the held want because I know hat's what Drama wants

I'm assuming there's not a favourite project series. Oh, yeah, Not a favourite at all My favourite song is the last one I record. And then I will forget it after the next one I record.

How much are you driven by still wenting to be known as the best rapper alive?

Every single action, every single word, every single approach. The reason why I'm still only stering and working on my own shit is because I in in it. I becave once you start trying to isten to everybody esse, you ain't in it no more. You just happy to be here. But not me. I'm in a gym working or my own game. I don't care now high you jumping. I don't care how fast you run. You can't even stand next to me with that shit



"Every time I meet a fan, the first thing they tell me is the things that I haven't accomplished. And I love it, because I be like, 'You're right. I'm trying to get that too, man'''

Keeping with that basketball metaphor Michael Jordan doesn't get to play against Kevin Durant or LeBron James at this point, but you get to go up against rappers of the new generation. How motiveted are you by showing the next generation you're still that dude? The motivation isn't to show them that I'm still that dude, which I art. The motivation is to show them why I'm still that dude. That's the motivation, because want them to hopefully get something from that and they continue to still be whoever the dude or woman they are.

I saw that Teyana Taylor and NLE Choppe recently gave you alfts: exclusive Air Jordan is from Teyana, and a slew of things - including a chain - from NLE Chopps. Do you often get gifts from other artists?

Not often at all liquids. And you know what? That's a sign of the new age. Their humility level was out of the stratosphere compared to what ours was. We lad this brayador "I'm better than you My clique better than your chique " You ain't had no artist saving, "Hey, man, let me give you this." f ain't going to sie, the Ruff Ryders always had something to give you

when you come to New York, so they was cool. But other than that, they ain't giving you no damn gifts and sh

What other traits have you noticed from Interacting with vounger artists that ere different from prior generations?

You can get comfortable quick as an artist these days because of social media. You can work your ass off and put a song out and people like it, and all of a sudden somebody comes and eats a pencil. and that person gets a billion akes more than you. It's a different world. When we was doing this. we had a sense of knowing that his is what we are doing and you're liking it or loving it because you like it or love us. These kids know that whatever they doing. you could just swipe left or swipe right and there a another person doing t too. So it is a lot they have to dea. with

How many songs are you knocking out in a day? work or multiple songs a day. I probably took at 20 verses a day. I'm on my bus right now. I have a studio set up on this bus. We have a studio bus behald me in every hotel we get to, before I get to the room, my two engineers set up a studio in the addroom. And I told you, we already have a studio booked in that city ... that city has a nice studio, meaning

don't stop working. Even on tour

Who ? Yeah even on your What? I'd be at my kid's graduation with a studio if they had one [laughs]

Has there been a particular instance when an artist said something about your influence that really touched you?

I would say every time because It's anexpected. But the most recent would be the homeboy NLE Choppit. People got to see him give me the chain, but when I went to shoot the video with him and Italked with him over the phone, [I realised] that Kid is very different. It's amazing to see a person like him. But other than that, 2 Chainz did a whole song about me Then I saw something else where someone's filming themselves rapping a song and it was a whole ode to me, but it was rapping if to 'A Milli' the way I rap 'A Milli' And speaking of 'A Milli'.



"These days, because of social media, you can put a song out and people like it, and all of a sudden somebody eats a pencil and gets a billion likes more than you"

you see Tyga shoot a Whole video referencing videos I've shot?

What are some things that are out there that you'd still like to accomplish as a musician? Oh, man, I'm so fucking far from that. What? The Grammys just started to say what's up to me. Every time I meet a fan, the first dring they going to tell me is the things that I haven't accomplished. And I love t, because I be like, "You re right, man. I'm pissed off about that too, I'm trying to get that too, man."

So when you say "far front," what is it that you feel like-It's a bunch. That's a whole 'nother

interview, man. There's a whole busich of fillings I haven't done that I've seen other folks do that I ve said to myself, "Man, I'd k.Il + if i had that opportunity" Super Bowl, hint, hipt

How would you feel about doing the Super Bowl?

What? "How would you feel?" I'd. kfi ha shit We wouldn't even worry about the game after that Everybody knew that one kid (who) was watching the halftime show, but that'd be one of the first Super Bowls that they'll be like, "Both teams were out on the field watching the halftime show."

You've been performing at big venues for a long time. Was there a point where you missed Intimate venues and wanted to get back to this kind of tour? Yeah, that was the whole reason. Just for the simple fact of embracing my fans. They love the fuck out of me

I see there's talk of a CoffeGrove 2. a segual to your collab album with 2 Chamz, coming out, I was wondering if you could give an update on where things are with that process?

We've been finished with CoffeGrove, Me and Tit 12 Chains I every time we get together, we record. We got, like, 39 million songs. But he been putting t ingether. He was just warding to get certain samples cleared. He's very persistent. So sometimes when in ngs dor't get cleared, he'l go in the ampteenth to get it cleared So saft, once he say when, that's when we coing.

I saw that your videographer Phil gave you a pro skateboard In December, Have you actually used it?

Oh, yeah, that s my pro model. Al. my homies skale the pro model We all skate

Would you ever enter a skate contest, given that you've been sketing for so long?

Oh no Het no That's what I have a skate ream for Anumbar's what it was all about anyway just giving back and opening doors for those kids. They do this shit the way that I hap.

You don't feel like you're ouite of their calibre?

Nah, we ain tentering no compet tions or nothing. Also, there's different forms of skading. There's compertion skating, there's vert skating, there's street skating, and there's training skating, I'm a street skater So my whole pla form in akaring is putting out a video

Who are you listening to these

When it comes to rap, I don't distent to no one. I fust don't have time to, because I'm trying to get better every day 1 tell my own artist that, too. When you find a favourite artist, you're going to start sounding like them. It took Birdman and them to pull my ass aside and be like, "Bro. I'm tired of every song you doing sounding like damn Jay-Z. You're not Jay-Z."

How did you take it when he said that? Is that something you were cognizent of?

Yeah, I was glad it was working [mughs]. Thar's like, "Oh, good, it's working."

How much longer do you see yourself rapping? Do you ever think about retirement?

When you work the way I work. it gets strengous, and it might flash. And even when you say it I don't think you actually mean stop working or doing music. You probably just mean you want to retire from everything else but the music limighs. When you rean artist a rea, artis, like myself. I was born this way. Sc I don't think that the real true artists and bloneers, her never redre. They died doing his.

I saw DJ Toomp talk about a memorable studio session with you, 2 Chainz, and Benny the Butcher What do you remember from that session?

That was a rap session. That was one of them "Cash Money flew to New York and we done ended up in the same studio with Dipse fort Ruff Ryders Isessions That's one of them old sessions Ivou used to see on VHS or something, where you see Fallor In there, you might see fada, al. hem to one studio, and that's one o them sessions

Could you put an estimate on how large your vault of unreleased music is?

My drive goes back to 2010, and hat's fast this commuter. So that means that number isn't even possible to even fathom. You probably got a million songs in one year

I've seen a lot of Lil Wayne Verzuz talk. Are you interested in doing one, and which artist would you be interested in competing with?

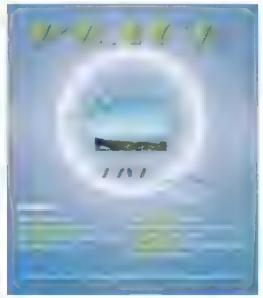
Lwas Interested in Mixtage Weezy going against Lil Wayne. That would have been crazy

So you'd be onstage by yourself?

Yeah. What other artists you think? There ago't no other artis, that can stand on the stage next to me, bro. I'm sorry @

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MUSIC

Sibling harmony

Heartstopper actor Will Gao and his sister Olivia Hardy have created a blend of contemporary alt-pop that also draws influence from their traditional music training. Here, they explain why they want to make classical music and jazz accessible for all

By EMMA WILKES

ILLIE EILINHI" "Phoebe Bridgers!" "Boygen is " "Ening Deenn"

"Agh I don't know, my mind's rlank . Sevencét*

Siblings Will Goo and Olivia Hardy are playing a game. They're batting back and forth some of the names that officence their band, Wasia Project. Many of the artisis are quintessential suples of Generation-2 Spotify playlists, but others, such as ABBA, E top John, The Beatles and ELO, are exports from their parents' CD collection. During heir childhood, they'd spend evenings at home daucing to whatever was blaring from the speakers

They haven't yet touched on the influences, however, that make Wasia Project un que Bosh Gao and Hardy have a background n classica. from both Western nations and East Asia and jazz mus c, and both can play an instrument Gao, who found fame acting in Netflux's comingof age smash hit Heartstopper, took up classical plant at a very young age, while Hardy learned vio, in via the Japanese method of Suzuki, which favours learning by ear over using sheet music "In the classica, music world, it's not been very beneficial," she says, speaking over Zoom in a bedroom

with min sereon walls, "bec use reading a lot of sheet music is an mportant part. But it's helped with our creative process - it's a iot more intultive!

What do they love about those styles? "There's such pure emotion in classical music." says Gao. "When classical music is tragic, it's gut wrenching. It can be really into ise Librar hat passion and intensity you can hear in it, and also in faxs. is equivalent to the kinds of music тетим стенted today."

Their background in those styles oled into their contemporary alt pop palette naturally and spontaneously "We can't not acknowledge or invaudate our past history with those genres." Gao. continues. "It's Inberen, in our work, even wher we don't realise a's there. I don't think we could do any other way"

Classica, and juzz are, arguably, an acquired laste, frequently dismissed as too highbrow, too stuffy or too dense. What the siblings have done with Wasia Pro ect, however, is nadvertently wedge open a door that makes those sounds more accessible and contemporary for heir audience, many of whom are their age, if not you ager

"It's getting more and more difficult for people to get acress to classica and fazz: it's almost starting to become more of a closed shop in a lot of ways," Gao acknowledges. "I think one of the ways forward is to make it accessible by biending Ithose genres and pop and having sections where the music is very classically nill jenced, and that hopefully leads people to see where that comes from '

'lt's all about trying to make them less rigid and making people feet alke classica, and jazz ready is for them," Hardy adds. "They re such trage genres, there shouldn't be this arbitrary shutting down of them, like] 'Oh, thad's not for me "

Gao and Hardy's musical journeys weren't Identical. although their paths can parallel to one another, and they both attended each other's concerts "allthe time" growing up. Gao three years older than his sister, who at he time of writing is a few days away from in saling her Allevels sion field gog sit, rwob belt, mass earlier than his sibing, too, "I had this realisation when I was 14, when I was like, 'Oh my gosh, you can write a song and it doesn't have to be a concerto!" he says with a urin. Their paths eventually converged when they began Wasia Project in 2019, uploading debut single 'why don't is love me' to SoundCloud that

Since then, the siblings have progressed from DIY recordings on GarageBand to working on their ethereal, eclectic creations in a studio with producer Luke Pinell for their 2022 EP 'how can i pretend?' Two further singles - the softly sunny 'Petals on the Moon' and the gently unfurling, intimate





Jazz pop number 'My Lover Is Sieoping' followed this year, with another two set to be receased his side of Christinas. Those songs are set to become, in Gao's words, "the ground floor of the building we wan, to create"

Wasta Project's faribase thrives online with socia, media affering a vital forum for fans to connect where each other and with the band themse'ves. "The atmosphere's very community-based," explains Hardy "I'The community's gone beyond the music because people have really made friendsups and connected through the music, We get a lot of people saying they've united with people because of

"When classical music is tragic, it's gut-wrenching. It can be intense. That passion is equivalent to music being created today"

a song, and things like that," explains Hardy.

Some of them stambled across the band because of Gao's role in Heartstopper, where he plays Tao Xu, the loya, but occasionally prickly best filend of protagon ist Charlie (Joe Locke) Although a fraction of the fanbase might have come because of his TV fame,

they've stayed for the music. "I don't think they'd come if shey did. like the music," Gao reckons. Others, however, have found Was.a Froject without knowing Heartstopper, meaning that on stage, he isn't defined by his experience on the small screen.

Things have moved a little slower for the band in 2023 as Hardy has

had exams to prepare for, but she isn't planning on going to ditiversity immediately. "Unit will a ways be there, but music is for now," she says She'a, therefore soon be free to hammer he glat of deas he pair are stiting on into shape, moving ever closer cowards their goal of creating "a skibless abum".

"We're exper menting with new sounds. We we aboully us it used plano and voice, which is stripped back and raw and powerful in and of itself, but being in the studio and being able to use strings and new beets and it ings like that is so exciting," Hardy concludes. "We're in his pavground of sound. We re going crazy with it."



INCE THEIR DEBUT Heartbreaker EP in 2013, Bristo based DF producer dup Roy Spencer (DI M meyshot opposite left) and Adam Volson (Rackabeat) have built a powerful reputation for music that combines oldschool furnitablism with ploneering sampling. Their newly released sixth album Tear the Place Up tearures vocals by Dgly Duckling's Andy Cooper. The Pharcyde's Bootle Brown and Marietta Smith.

Spencer started out in the 90s listening to the hip-hop Dis of San Francisco and ended up making mix tapes for Ninja Tune's soud Steer label. Volsion's first love was dram'n bass. The pair met while hey were both residents a the touring Chai Wallahs' festival tent and, after trying out their own productions, they came together as The Adendes, In 2021. as part of a promotion with Pioneer DL their track 'Say the Word' was remixed by IO renowned turntablists including M x Master Mike, DI Nu Mark and DI Pully.

"We have the 4m and yang element." savs Spencer. "He orthus the polished production style, the fine-tuning, cherryon-ton sonic clarity, while I bring the deep-duraing and knowledge of music to find records that might work together."

Was your set-up pretty DIY when you started out?

Spencer: Estarted with one turntable and a guitar amp and bought my turniables one at a time belt drives. which are a ridiculous, redundant way to start mixing I you're a hip-hop DI. Good for blending, but not for scratching. Then I got some early cracked software in the late. 90s and made lone mix tapes in five sht. seven-nour sessions. I failed to save any of them, because I didn't have the benefit of recalling things when they crash, like on Ableton. Always buy a licensed product.

Volson I stole my dad's stereo and plugged my decks into the back of that. recording straight onto a tape deck.

How had technology changed by the time you started producing?

Spencer: Mixers got thinner and thinner for Oling battle-style, bringing the setup closer together for tricks. Sometimes with a house maxer, you conidn't really scratch, but design people were making creative decisions that really heiped shape turntable culture

Volson. Then there was the introduction of virtual DI platforms integrated into mixers, Our Pioneer DJ Sits have got Serato built in, which means you've got so much more to play with. For our live show, we load all our samples into our laptops, which can be connected to these mixers, so we've not free retn. We re not, imited by what's pressed on record anymore.

Your music is heavily sample-based. How does that work now, compared to the Wild West early days of sampling?

Spencer: It's a lot easier, with labels that are thinking about syncing to TV and adverts and putting music on digital platforms. If you re releasing things that are just stolen, you're endangering everyone's live shood. There are a lot more legal ways to clear samples now: we try to make sure everything's 100 per cent transparen in hat way More and more. All is locating samples buried within cracks, so what you might think is safe now inlight not be in ten years' time.

So, rights holders want to have songs sampled as a means of reviving interest in them?

Volson: Absolutery, Record labels are buying up back catalogues of all kinds of music, then putting them on line and saying, "Hey, come and use these samples, they to precleared." The fees and splits are already worked out, which is a quicker and easier way of doing things. Often, it's also cheaper for artists than approaching a major label

What do you do with these in the studio?

Volson: Apleton has become the too, for cutting up, re-pitching and me-stretching samples that's been monumental | use Logic to mix stuff in, then lots of emulation plugins and saturation plugins and stuff to dirty it Ltb. If we've got an old record we sampled and a new drum break recorded in a studio, we need to make that drum break sound old.

Spencer: Serato DI has an arbuilt pitch and time detector, which tells me what key that record's in then I can throw that into Abieton and chop an eigh, but 1000 visually. like Tetris or Lego bricks his very easy to understand. The time starts there. Lalso use online software called Moses, an Al that can analyse any track and extract key elements liet's say it's a Roding Stones record, you cats pull Mick out, and it sounds almost like a clean acapella. Previously, people would have to dig through to find a clean part of a record where the vocal breaks down to turn it.

nto a hook. Now that whole track can be available for vocal audio extraction.

You've mentioned Alla couple of times. What's your opinion of it?

Volson: It's pretty overwhelming what's going to happen. I'm worried about music licensing, which is where we make a lot of our money. I think one of the first things to happen will be that people use Al to make big ibraries of royalty-free music, which is going to be a lot cheaper for advertisers than paying artists. That's scary, But inerms of what it might bring to Dling and production, it's all guite exciting. Like any hing in life, there are two stdes=o it

As artists who create music which is so studio-based, how do you translate it into an exciting live show?

Volson: Roy and I Di records in bars, but the more exciting part of what we



do is our live show with some musicians. We're the rhythin section of the band. we play the backing tracks with all the drums and bass in, and we sera chiand drop samples on top. This means designing all the scratches perfectly to the deciber in the studio first, so they're flawless, and checking that Roy's scratch is the same volume as my scratch and vice versa. Having mixers which can flip between samples quickly is a godsend, and so are the Pioneer DI SH's onboard effects. Scratches can sound stagnant and forling sometimes, but with all the smooth echo and spacey effects in there, it helps things gel and flow

DAVID POLLDON



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SCAN TO SUBSCRIBE



"I am the Doctor.

As he embarks on a journey through time and space as the 15th Doctor in the legendary *Doctor Who* series, Ncuti Gatwa talks about identifying with one of TV's most-loved characters and how he plans to reinvent the iconic role

Doctor Is mc.

By Alison Rumfitt

41

I's A VERY, very hot day, the first of the year. We've spent the whole afternoon in a studio north of King's Cross. London, fanning ourselves and drinking water to stop us from overheating. This is Neu i Garwa's big moment, While he's been striking poses for his Rolling Stone UK cover shoot, I ve been sitting in the corner watching and feeling a little

voyeuristic. It's always interesting to witness an artist interacting with the people working around them, it reveals so much Gatwa is clearly excited to be here. He buzzes with energy when he chats to the photographer to the glam team and, after the shoot has wrapped, to me. Top of the list of topics we're here to talk about is Doctor Who - Galwa was a memored as the new incarnation of the feoric lead character last year. Although he show's apcoming stories are a closely guarded secret, I was able to glean some interesting tithis from its new stor

"My Doctor is emotionally vulnerable. He hides it with humour, but he's lonely," says Garwa of his forthcoming reinvention of the ever-changing Doctor. "I can't say much more than that, I don't want to spot anything. But he's also energetic! The poor cameramen struggled to keep up."

To hear Gatwa tell the story of his cost rut. It almost sounds like he was granted a wish. One day he emailed his agent saying he wanted to play a role like Willy Wonka of the Doctor and just a week later he was asked to audition for the part of the Time Lord To prepare, Gatwa spent a week watching every Doctor Who episode since its 2005 reviva. Although he had enjoyed the show previously, he never considered himself a habitual fan. He emerged from that bingewatching week a die-hard Whoylan.

"I fed in love with it," he enthuses, and he means it. There is undoubtedly a special quality about Doctor Who that's hard to deny. "When you watch it, you forget all your

troubles," says Gatwa. "You go to space, or to another time. You have adventures."

A big part of the show's post-2005 story revolves around the Doctor having survived a devastating war that wiped out the rest of his people. This is a plot point that has since been undone and then redone: Its current status in the canon is sumewhat uncrear But it's this that Catwa late led onto because in that story, he he was able to see a reflection of his own life. As a child, Gatwa and his family fled Rwanda, escaping the genocide against the Tutst minority. They settled in Scotland. "This person survived a genocide. This person his a everywhere and nowhere. I am the Doctor The Doctor is me. I decided that I had to get this rote," anys Gatws.

He is still trying to keep up with the pace of his career. "The trajectory of my life changed five years ago, in 2018," he says, referring to his first major role in Netll x's Sex Education. "And that was one thing. That was a very fast moving train. I'm still trying to get to grips with what happened then but,.. now the train has gone turbo this past year."

That sudden fame seemed potentially scary. "Actors pick this job to hide behind out characters. And now suddenly you're centre stage. People know where you went to school. So you just have to focus on the job. The fame side can be distracting," he says

He does seem to miss are smaller scale work that theatre afforded him, "It kept me warm and it held me all night, even if I was broke.

Bu. I'm planning on getting back to it next year, after I finish season two of Doctor Who," he says

Gatwa's stage roles are fast as impressive as his screen credits. In 2016, he was in A Midsammer Night's Dream - his favourite Shakespeare play - at the Globe. "I love that t's about fairles and lovers," he says. "And, of course, it's so sexual! We give this to kids in schools and you're worried about drag queens?"

There is a clear through line between that play and Sex Education - both are ensembles. both deal with sex and relationships, both feet at odds from their particular seiting and both feature, in Gatwa's words, "frolicking in a forest*

On our second meeting in London's Soho a week later, we delve a bit deeper into his time on the lit series. Sex Education is very frank abou, its depictions of sex, yet Catwa's parents are religious; his father has a PhD in theology. How did they feel about their son being in such a show? "We don't really speak about it, but they have seen it," he says "I didn't want them to, but I couldn't stop them. And they are very supportive, thankfusy. It's not the most comfortable thought to know that my marn knows what my cum face looks like but .. we move."

Saving goodbye to the show was bittersweet. he tells me. Although he's grateful for the experience, at times he struggled with the show's creative direction. "It was very hard, 't was such a big show," he recalls "When you're

When you watch it, you forget all your troubles. You go to space, or to another time. You have adventures"





I couldn't put my faith in an old book that had been used for so much evil.

telling stories that invenit been seen before, here's always a bathe as to how to tell item. It wasn't always Joyous. I fee like we've outgrown it and we've given everything we can to ft," says Gatwa, who turns 31 in October while has character Eric is in his late teens.

It also gave him a rude awakening as to the reality of working in TV. "Being on it fast tracked me futo the downsides of this industry. I remember being tood by an executive producer that white people wouldn't understand my character, Bric, which incensed me. There's an entire show there for white people to understand."

Gatwa clearly thinks hard about things fee this it can lead to him feeling conflicted. A recent example is when he took up the offer to perform at the King's coronation, partly because he felt a strong desire to be on stage Instead of on TV and film sets. "I did feel an unease about it, though," he admits. "We're in a cost of eving crisis, and I'm going to a giant house to perform. Plus, you know, the diamonds in that house... All of that was sitting within me. But it was also an opportunity to celebrate the arts. I wanted to celebrate the arts. I wanted to relebrate the arts. I wanted to be on stage, I wanted to do Shakespeare."

when asked if he considers h meeling and the considers he meeling the considers he meeling and the considers he meeling a large that the question "I have faith..." he says, before taking a long pause. I am about to change topic when he continues. "I was raised in church. Both my parents are traditional Rwandan Christians. I loved my upbringing in church. It's a big part of my identity. However, a long time ago I fell

or, of love with it all. I sale feel a connection to something greater than us, "hough, I can like my life without it. I have to believe something will save us from AI."

I get the sense that church offered continuity to a young Gatwa, Although Sco land is a place Gatwa now iden thes with, t is also a majority white country. There weren't many other Black families around when he was growing up, let alone Rwandan people - and asylum seekers at that. "That was trouting. I had to discover myself in a deeper way," he says. "Not that there's a disconnect between me and the Black Br tish community, because I am Black and I am British, but there aren any Rwandans Certainly, there weren't any in Schland Church was how we found a community Church people can be the kindest people and they can be shock high crue."

These days, Catwa is more interested in astrology. As with a lot of millennials, it offers a structure during a particularly chaotic period in time the's a Libra sun. Gemini Moon and Scorpto rising, for those who want o know). He has Co- Stat (as well as other astrology apps) on his phone and he checks it every single day "It probably filled a gap that religion left in me. I couldn't put my faith in an old book that had been used for so much evil i found astrology so accepting. It helped me accept my own darkness, and other people's darkness, too. I had a very... bad breakup. I ended up becoming homeless after it People will probably think this sounds so silly but once the grieving was done once I'd found a safe home again, typing in our respective star signs and seeing all this

Neuti Gatwa





MOUSE WEARS SUMPSUIT AND ENDER SUPPLIES





THE PARTS

OPPOSITE

writing that described so accurately what the problem was between us, it led me to be able to forgive them. I understand their motives now I don't forget their actions, but I can forgive their motives."

georg we see the make his debar as the Doctor, Gatwa wil. be on the big screen in Barbie, which fee.s like a curious progression from Sex Education and Shakespeare. He plays one of the many Kens in Greta Gerwig's film, but when he first auditioned, he was reading for a completely different part although he won't reveal which one. In that first audition over Zoom he didn't have a script or even a synopsis of the plot, only one small scene and the knowledge that it was being directed by Gerwig and that it starred Margot Robbie and Ryan Goslang. That would be enough for anyone to want a part in the movie, though. It seems like roughly half of Hodywood did want a part judging by the cost list. It became a meme that every actor in the business was either being drafted into Barble or Christopher Nosan's Oppenheimer, which will be released on the same day in the UK.

Catwa may have been unsuccessful with that first audition, but he clearly left an impression. A month later, he was contacted to read for a different role, "This sounds so arrogant," he says, "but my agent said that Greta hadn't been able to stop thinking about me, so I was asked back to audition for Ken. Which was confusing because Ryan was Ken " When he got a scene for that second audition through, though, things were clearer But even then, he kept second-guessing himself. He spent the rest of the day recording alternate line reaulings and sending them to the casting agent. Then he got word that Grets wanted to talk. "I've gotten down to the fina, two so many times," he says. "Then I meet the director and... I'm convinced that there's something about me that just turns them off I was sure this would be the same. thing assin "

Gatwa is so naturally charming, it's hard to buagine anybody having that reaction to him. "I ve always felt I m not masculine enough, not whotever enough for these directors. I can play that, but when they see that I'm not that..." he trails off.

Thankfully, he was wrong, "The Leo-Libra, vibe was just there on that Zoom meeting," he says. Gerwig had essentially written down his name in the script as "Ken Neuti" right after that first audition hadn't worked out. And in a neat bit of fan-service casting, Emma Mackey, Gatwa's co-star from Sex Education, plays a Barble. She'd known about Gerwig's plan the Neuti Gatwa

whole time but had been gworn to secrecy.

Gatwa te.is me that the first day on the Barble set was a dance scene with all the Barbles and Kens present, including Margot Robble and Ryan Gosting, "I didn't know they were real people before that. I though they were Just... concepts," he says, before quickly learning that they weren't, of course.

He then supplies a sweet anecdote about his time spent with the cast. "One of the best nights of my life was when Margot took al, the Barbies and all the Kens out in London to see Maude Mike Live. That was... I don't know how I made it through any filming in the week after, my Voice was gone from screaming so much The videos in the group that the next morning were the best. Greta Gerwig's assistant was pulled up on stage and given a lap dance and Greta was screaming in delight. Afterwards, we went and danced our hearts out. Margot ts a very, very good party nost. She's queen of the wines."

Of course, playing a ken doll couldn't be much further from taking up the mantle of Doctor Who, and Gatwa admits that nerves are starting to affect lum.

"I'm very nervous, I have a lot of sleepless nights where I lie awake feeling my heartbeat." he says. It is hard to linegine the pressure he must suddenly be fee ing, but it's understandable nevertheless. Doctor Who is a science-fiction. family show that has run, on and off in some form, for 60 years. It's also a nexus of so much of British culture. Like James Bond, the Doctor is a character through which Britain learns to understand itself, as much an icon of our changing times as a fictional being. The show's connection to British identity means tensions can run high and fans can be cruel at times. seemingly over-protective because they feel that



I'm the

The British press can be very mean ... I just have to stay true to what the Doctor is

gradu - 10. 17

the show is something they own. They can also be bigoted in the most predictable ways.

"I'm the first Black man to play this character. The British press can be very mean," he says of the reaction to his casting But Gatwa is determined to remain seedflast in the face of criticism. "Last have to focus on the job and stay true to what the Doctor is a mad scient is aften who has adventures and cares about everyone." he says

Thankfally, the Doctor Who team are helping him handle the pressures that come with its new role. "Russell T Davies has been amazing, too. He camis me down. He's such an Earth sign. I can get very anx.ous, but therapy helps, and they've made sure that I have time put aside to have my sessions."

Gatwa has also drawn support from some of the past Doctors, and has net Peter Capaidí, David Tennant and Matt Smith in person. He ran into Shith at a party sefore he'd been announced for the role and tipsily said "I'm following in your footsteps!" - a remark which balled Sm. h until Gatwa was o licially confirmed as the new Doctor Gatwa relis me that Tentant set up a group chat where some of the previous actors stay in contact with one another, and they've all offered Gatwa support and advice on dealing with the press. After all, the only people that can really know what it's like to be the Doctor are those who have been the Doctor Once you're cast, you'll always be part of the show's long history.

The series will return to BBC One (and Disney) in other territories) in three specials his coming November all as far as we know starring David Tennant once more. Gatwa's first episode will be in a Christmas special set to air in December.

Doctor Who is all about retovention and with

Gatwa, this bold reimagining can be seen in his aesthetic interpretation of the offbeat time-, ravelling a len. Fashion intellment be the first thing people associate with Doctor Who, but what the Doctor wears is an intrinsic part of the show. Tom Baker's long scarf, Day d Tennant's pinstripe sait- those are things hat people I prediately associate with it. But Gatwa's Doctor might wer be the first ashionconscious one. "The day R essell hy see me to meet everybody, they asked me what sort of costume I wanted. I showed them this Ralph Lauren collection that was in partnership with Füstorically Black Colleges in America," he says "I love those pieces, they're so preppy and so Black But her they asked what else, recause they'd been thinking about lots of outfits, almost a different one each week. Which is new Tlove It The Doctor has travelled all of time and space, they're going to have a sick wardrobe "

Not that previous Doctors were badly dressed, mad. "I love Jon Perwee, the Third Doctor's, outfits Lovely velvet jackets and fir ly shirts. I feel a connection to him, our Doctors are the only wo who dress like sluts," he laughts

The Idea of multiple outlits has led to a fun press cycle where Twitter is requarly treated to a photoshoot of the Doctor and his companion in a completely new style each time. The most notable of these was a Swinging shittles look with Gatwa sporting in blue striped suit and an Afro. "The ball and makeup department have been incredible," he exclaims. "Claire Wildams and my own makeup artist, Bella, who is an old friend, worked so well ogether in creating my looks. Originally, we weren tigoting to have the Afro, but Bella convinced me and I'm very glad she did. It's such a short in o the bloodstream. It's a statement—the Doctor of fucking Black."

Back * ***



OFFOSITE

As he releases
The Show, Niall
Horan reveals
how he "lives"
for touring, his
desire to
connect with
fans through his
songs, and the
challenge of
going out for
chips in his Irish
hometown

BY MCK LEVINE

PINTOCRAPHY BY HR STIAN TIERNRY

SHOW AND TELL

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lt's almost a cliché to call Niall Horan a super-nice guy", but really, there's no getting away from it.

He may have papied his new album The Ston, but Horar feels no need to put one on for a journalist. In fact, the Irish singersongwriter is so and back and akeable when we meet at a squart London notel in the run-up to the record's release - fresh flowers everywhere, bottled water on the table that I ask how he's stayed so welladjusted. "It's probably a combination of the upbringing I had and the fact I already had enough character at 16 to deal with it ," he says, "It might have been a different story | Flid started doing this when I was It)."

Now 29, he has been scartly famous for almost half his life. After aud, for ng for The X Factor in 2010 as a soio artist. 16-year-old Horan was e limitated at the boot camp stage then given a spectacular second chance as one fifth of a hasfily assembled group called One Direction He and his new bandmates Zayn Mauk, Liam Payrie Harry Styles and Louis Tomimson didn't win that year's show, but still used it as a springboard to become a chart-top, this global phenomenon By the time One Direction announced an indefinite hiatus in January 2016, they had sold 70 m Flor records worldwide and debuted a mamber one in the US with heir first four albums - something not even The Beatles achieved. When asked what he would say to his pre-10, 16-year old self, Horan repiles; "Get ready. Your le's about to change on a level that most of the world can't even quartify "

Horan says he still speaks to "the ads" on a regular basis but, like all of them, he has worked hard to carve out an iden I y as a so o artist. If Horan's individua, achievements still feel slightly underrated, that's probably only because his flashier bandmate Styles is now a stad um-fil lng superstar

Released in 2017, Horan's debut album Flicker was a deft blend of soft rock, folk and country that debuted at number one in the US and Ireland. His 2020 follow up Heartbreak Weather added a dash of

swagger to the mix particularly on the Brit poppy single 'Nice to Meet Ya' and became his first UK chart-topper Because It dropped in March 2020, Just as Covid-19 was taking hold. Horan never got to take the album on the road. "I haven't toured since 2019 that's wild," he says, "I nove live music and I love touring I live for it So, it's sad that I haven t done ha."

happily, a few weeks after this interview, Horan announced The Shop Live on Tour, a 50-date trek across Europe. North America, Australia and New Zeakand that will keep him busy from February to July of next year. When Horan last toured five years ago, he mainly played large theatres, but now he s aiming to pack out avenus from Birmingham to Brishane During our conversation, he hinted that he was ready for the step up, "In my eyes, the bigger the venue, the better, because I fuckling love looking ou, at an ocean of people." he says. "For me, it feels like the bagger the venue, the better the show is gonna be."

Boran also makes no bores about wanting The Show to become another Uk number one "There a nothing better than getting that "tile statue sent to your house" he says with an impish grin. At the time of writing, he seems well on course for another express delivery from the Official Charts Company. The album's breezy lead single 'Heaven' cracked the JK Top 20 in February, and its sprightly follow-up 'Me (down' was released at the end of April. A few hours before this tracrylew. I watch him perform both songs In the Radio I Live Lounge Horan is just as relaxed with his hand during rehearsals, but when he spots that his vocals are getting buried in the mix, he quickly and calmly gets it corrected

Horan began working on The Show while ho ed up at home during the summer of 2020. The a burn tile had come to him ear fer in the year but he "didn't really know what it meant until the pandemic". When he sat down at the plano that August, the lyrics that came out for the song. The Show' seemed to capture the confusion of the Covid era. "If everything was easy, nothing ever broke / if everything was simple how would we know?

How to fix your tears, how to fake a show" At this point, Horan says he reaused The Show was both "a metaphor for life" and an overarching concept he could run with. "When there's no heartbreak to write about,, you have to come up with a different concept," he says. "I realised quite quickly that what I wanted to talk







about was the ups and downs and good and bad of life. That's The Show."

Having "no heartbreak" is about as much as Horan will say about his persona. He Weeping that staff quitet" he believes, is one reason he remains so grounded. Since 2020, he has been dating Amella Woonley, a designer shoe buyer who never appears on his work focused instagram. But when we discuss You Gould Start a Cult', an kitosynera it folk ballad from the album. Horan does offer a leasing glimpse into their home afe. He says the song's eye-catching title was inspired by the frue-crime series, hey de waschung. "I always try and write welrd stuff like tha",

"I LOVE LIVE MUSIC AND I LOVE TOURING 12/1E FOR TE 11/OVE LOOKING OUT YEAN OCEAN OF PEOPLE"

hen see if I can fup it on its hend and make he song itself inot as dark as the title," he says, in this case, Boran libped it into a "love song, effectively", albeit an intense one: "It's about... not the desperation fee ing, but he I think you're the best fucking filling in he world' feeling," he explains. "And if you started a cult, I die new you into the lire. You know, that kind of augst, though, dun't know. If angal is the word I'm looking for!"

ORAN SPENDS A lot of time in LA because his record (abe) and producers are based there. His main collaborators on The Show were Joel Little, who he brought In because he liked his work with Taylor Swift, Indie artis, Noah Kahan, and ionst-dine co-writer John Ryan, a veteran of four One Otrection albums "I think it's really important first of all to be loyal," he says of his enduring partnership with Ryan. "And you know, if it's not broke, don't fix it." Still, working with Little fest just as comfortable, partly because they could pick things up at a moment's notice. "If I get the green light at he top of my street in LA), I can be at Joel's house to less than a minute," Horan says "it's a fucking dream!"

But during the pandemit. Horan was grounded at his main base in southwest London. "I've never been fitter in my life because I was cycling 80 or 90 miles around Richmond Park every week It's gorgeous out



there," he recalls. Lake many of us. Horan has conflicting fee ings about the way Covid placed our lives on hold, "I don't want to say I enjoyed it because a didn't

It was such a horrible time." he says "But I got to a point about two or three months in, where I was like "This is the longest I've ever had off. He particularly appreciated having to stay in one place for a sustained period of time. "Normally, I'm packing a suitcase every three or four days." he says, "At Heathrow Airport, the guards at the security] desk just laugh when they see me coming. They're like, 'How do you do this?"

Having lived in London since he was 16. Horari says "it's definitely the best city on the planet" But at the same time, he still regards Mullingar, the Irish market town where he was born and raised, as home His debut solo single 'This Town', a UK top 10 hit in 2016, was incredibly charming because it harnessed his ineffable longing for the place. Horan reckons he returns to Mullingar "seven or eight times a year", although walking down the high street is pretty tricky "I can't just pull up outside the chip shop, run in and get the chips, then run back to the car," he says.

"Everything has to be thought through. Like, 'Where are I going to park? How many screets am I going to have to cross? What am I going to wear?" Horan says all this with no hint of frustration: by now, he knows what is expected of a homecoming hero

Horar knew he wanted to be a musician from a young age and says he "tried to make this as clear as possible" to his parents. They were "supportive up to a point", but because the family didn t have much money and Mulingar wasnit a creative hab like Dublin, his mother arged him to "get some sort of qualification". "I still don't have any," Horan says with a laugh, "I didn't do GCSEs or anything like hat because I didn't finish school." At 16. Horan made the 50-mile journey to Dublin to audition for The X Factor and grabbed hold of the One Direction rocket with both hands

D d his parents come up with any ideas for a Plan B? "We didn't get that far Honestly, I just packed my bag and never came back that's the way they look at it," says Horan. "My father worked in Tesco for 35 years and my mother worked at a pewter genesis company making little bits and pieces clocks and things like that

They both had very regular jobs." Horan notes astately that some kids from a working-class background "like to spread their wings and leave the nest" as he did, quite spectacularly whereas others "like to stay in their hometown, or maybe can't get out" Horan pauses for a second. perhaps to ponder what might have been. "I don't know what they would have wanted me to do, but I'm sure it would have been a good life," he continues, "Like, my parents are having a good time "

Thirteen years after he left to become a pop star. Horan's own ambition remains andimmed "I've achieved a lot in my young life, but I'm still fired up to do as much as I can," he says. "My career has te i so good because it reminds me of everything I thought the music industry

"TVE ACHIEVED A LOT IN MY YOUNG LIFE, BUT I'M STILL FIRED LP TO DO ASMECHASTON"

would be when I was a kid. I got the good end of the stick in terms of I travelling the world and playing to millions. And I st.ll want more of that "

For this reason, the audience is always. at the forefront of his mind. "When I'm writing, I ask myself, 'Have I gone too specific to the point where it only makes sense to me?" he says. "And then I try and proaden the thought to make it as relatable as possible " 'Never Grow Up from Horan's new a burn was partly inspired by his girlfriend's parents, who are "still maday in love", but its tyrics will chime with One Direction fans who, also him, are close to turning 30. "Hope we still drink like we're back in the pub," Horan sings, "Hope we grow old, but we never grow up '

in Horan's eyes, the songs that fully stand the test of time from Simon and Garfunkel to Whitney Houston and Adele are "the ones that really mean a lot to the people" It's this kind of universal connection that he is always striving for "These are the things that go on in my head when I'm writing," he says. "I don't want to alienate anyone, and I don't want to be introspective to the point where I ruin it for everyone So, if they can connect to it too, then we all get what we want out of this " 6





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IT'S LUNCHTIME IN east London, and we're in an intimate, dimly lit restaurant not for from where 25-year-old Mahalia Burkmar lives. Walting on our order of chewy homemade dumplings, crisp cold noodles: and cucumber salad, the Leicestershireborn artist from the small town of Syston is chatting about her love of a certain hit TV show. "We're talking season one: Daphne and the Duke," she gushes with a wide smile. Almend of writing may reserved allows. Seemin Rhimes' raunchy period romp Bridgerton had a surprisingly big impact on the singersongwriter, "Shondo will never understand that that saved me," she says.

Occasionally, Mahalia pops a little pouch of elderflower saus into her mouth and winces slightly (after seven years, she decided to quit smoking), or else peppers silences by singing along to the tunes on the restaurant's playlist (she seems especially pleased when Christine and the Queens' 'Tilted' comes on). Everything about the young star - dressed in a black Stussy hoodle with a black racer vest undernesth, and her mid-length blonde halt pulled back in a ponytail - is as affable as all this might suggest: her demeanour is easy, effusive, and, overall, she seems pretty happy.

Cut back to a few years ago, though, and that wasn't the case. As with so many musicians, her career suddenly felt deeply precurious in the midst of the Covid-19 lockdowns. At the end of 2019, Mahalia put out her debut album, Love and Compromise, but what should have been a year of touring, and festivals was put on hold.

Around the same time, she had her heart broken - and so it was that Mahalia found. herself home alone (her ex took the dog, too). She felt completely unable to write music and was too sad to sleep in a bed that now seemed big and lonely, and so instead. she would lie on the sofa watching Netflix. "I was just in this pit of sadness, eating Super Noodles every day - some days my friends were basically force-feeding me-Super Noodles - it was a really deep part of my life. And then I honestly think it was something about Bridgerton," she laughs,

unabashed. "I'd moved into my firt, I'd, started seeing a therapist, and then I found the show and it pulled me out of whatever I was in. I was giggling, I was crying, I was really looking at love again - and even though it was in a show, I was looking at it again like it was something magical. And then I started writing."

It was around the same time - during the Rat Out to Help Out period - that Mahalfawent to a bar with some mates, just having a pint on the street, and ended up locking eyes with comeone new. "It was all just alignment; everything made sense," she beams, recalling the first meeting with the man who

would become ker current boyfriend, "Suddenly I had someone to go through the motions with, to talk about love with."

The two of themstarted to write together,. making the beginnings of what would become IRL, Mahalia's impressive second album. It's a. yibrant record which spans bangers and silky slow Jame, all topped with her sumptuous voice and forthright lyrics. There are tracks where she's just flexing, or checking in on her anxietter, conveying that her lifestyle is not as glamorous as people might

assume, but there's one overarching theme. it's apparent on hefty lead single "Terms and Conditions', which anthemically makes her expectations of lovers clear: "If you want my love / Then let's discuss the man you're required to be". On 'Lose Lose', she notes the pleasure of loving, but says that beyond the whirlwind, if it's not working, she is willing to let go of that person (and, tacitly, a part of herself). Elsewhere, Jojo appears for a glorious R&B stomper with the duo calling out cheaters like they're giving advice to a mate, while Stormay makes a tender contribution on 'November', #

beautiful track which Mahalia correctly describes as a wedding slow-dance song. On it, she delicately offers lines like "Dreaming's not as good as life, with you in it" while later acknowledging, "I love you even if you hurt me – and you might".

IRL, then, finds a young woman growing up on the title track she is literally in conversation with her younger self. Mahalia is embracing all parts of her being and acknowledging past hurt and loss, while still opening up to love all over again - because even with the potential for grief, she wagers that it's worth it. And this time around, she is unafraid to ask her partners for more and to leave them behind if they can't

provide it.

I tell her that I wish this album had existed a decade ago, so that I might have treated myself a bit better in romantic love during my twenties. Although she's delighted with the idea of it serving that purpose for young women, she's also adament that this record is for everyone. "I think people. think I hate men," she scoffs. "But what I'm really trying to do is change something; change the way of thinking. I have been with boys since childhood who could never. express their emotions and told me I was crazy."

Indeed, her storytelling fiere is far more nuanced than lazy misandry. We talk at length about patriarchy, and how even seemingly innocuous things like young boys pulling girls' hair at school as a means to get attention ends up in situations where, in heterosexual relationships, men express affection by hurting women, and women think they're in the wrong if they question that, "This shit's been going on since I was a fucking baby, and it's not changing quickly it's systemic," she exclaims. The conversation digs deeper as we discuss imposter syndrome more broadly, diving into how structures have been built with white, cla, hetero men,



in mind, so those of us who fall outside those identities feel uncomfortable - and how that can show up not only in our professional lives, but also our romanticones. "This game is rigged," she nods, vigorously. "This game wasn't built for me to succeed and find love and ask for what I need from a lover; it was built for us as women to sit down, agree, conform. And I suppose the place I'm at now is; I'm fustnot doing it."

Mahalia's 2019 album drew from that infamous Eartha Kitt Interview where the jazz singer was asked if she would be willing: to compromise in a relationship with a man-

In the clip she throws her head back, cackling in that infamously unassallable tone: "Stupid! A man comes into my life, and b have to compromise? For what? A relationship is a relationship that has to be earned [...] When you fall in love... What is there to compromise about? [...] I fall in love with myself, and I want someone to share it with me."

It's often the case that an artist will spend a lifetime revisiting the same themes in their work, turning over and reexamining ideas as they gain new experience and grow. Kitr's positing of self-actualisation and boundaries sitting hand in hand with an openness to vulnerability and softness remain central to

Mahalia's second album, Only this time the concept feels sturdter, like it's something she feels and knows more clearly than ever, "I think there's a lot of strength to this album," she agrees, "I thought that about my first album until I wrote this one - but this is more like feeling strong from the imide and allowing that to show on the outside. For me, this is definitely my most vulnerable [nustc].

Assured honesty is a throughline in Mahalia's work. At the age of 25, it's strange. but not untruthful to say she is already something of a veteran to the UK music scene, having signed to a major label when she was 13 years old. "I was always a bit nuts as a kid," she says, recalling a youth spent dancing, painting, acting and writing poems after hermum regularly read her Maya Angelou before going to bed. Mahalia's parents were in a band called Club O, gigging all over Leicester playing what her dad calls 'psycho-scoustic soul', "He was always writing songs in the house, always playing guitar, always singing," she says, "And mum was always singing and writing with him. And I must have watched them doing that from the age of four - and they're still doing it now." She remembers sitting front row at their shows with her brothers. "So, I think it [music] almost felt kind of inevitable. Maybe at first I was kind

of copying my dad," she grims. "I do remember thinking it was amazing he could create something with his hands like that."

On a rotating diet of Adele, Kate. Nash and Ed Sheeran (she recalls hearing 'The A-Team' for the first time on a mate's BlackBerry in the school changing rooms after PE), Mahalla started learning guitar, drums and bass around the age of 11. She began writing songs around the same time ("It didn't feel weird to me, because I watched my parents do it all the time"). Her reason for writing was, like so much great art, born out of a desire to impresssomeone she fancled, "I think [honestly started writing songs because I wanted to tell a boy that I really liked him," the laught, "One.

of the songs I wrote for him I sang in the talent show when I was about 12. This is what I mean when I say I was a bit nuts! I really didn't care what anybody thought!"

That heart-on-sleeve, give-no-fucks. determination infuses Mahalia's work to this day - but those early influences are perhaps: somewhat at odds with much of her output now. Marketed within the realms of R&B, soul and vibey, heady pop, all of which she fell in love with through her teen years, she is frank that she didn't fisel there was a place for her within. the more alternative world back then. "My first official love was guitar and vocal, but it was a





really different time. I was a Brown-skinned girl from Leicester, trying to play guitar with a British accent, and the industry literally Just said 'No," she sighs. "It was really sad. Now I'm watching artists I love like Cat Burns and Rachel Chinouriti come up, and I'm so happy that those girls are allowed to live in their life and make the music they wanns make, but part of me also mourns that 12 years ago that wasn't the case."

That genuine desire for others to succeed is perhaps why, both on social media and inreal life, Mahalia is always shouting about her peers, lifting up the work of others, as well te mentoring younger artists, She points to her music teacher, Mr Hill, who consistently encouraged her at school; to her family especially her mum, who took her to countlessopen-inic nights and drove her around the country in an attempt to fulfil what had then seemed like the impossible dream of meeting Ed Sheeran; and, of course, after her mum succeeded, Sheeran himself, who shared 13-year-old Mahalia's SoundCloud on Twitter, which led to her getting signed.

"The whole thing around 'it takes a village' really applied to me," she says, "There were so many adults in my life that made me feel there: was no limit to anything I wanted to achieve. I definitely wasn't confident in myself as a young girl, but I was really confident in what I thought I could achieve, and I think that was because I could see people believed in me. I know how estriking it can feel when other artists make you feel appreciated and respected, so I think It's really important for me to show love." And so, Mahalia is leading with the magic possibilities of love in all parts of her life.

With lunch over, we walk down the road, sitting outside in the back patio area of a café near Victoria Park. Here, Mahalta sips on a hot chocolate, reflecting on her current romanite relationship of three years. "I don't think I ever won't he a lover girl," she smiles. "It's really sweet. My bestle is always like, 'How do you open your heart over and over again?' And I'm like, "Because that just doesn't scare me!" ! probably don't want to feel the pain I felt from my ex ever again - but does it scare me? No! Writing this record, I just felt so sure about that, l could do it all again... even if I'd rather not." 🏚

hecob Colliar went Grammys for his first feur afficums and is the initial behind some of music's biggest like. Star collaborators including Collapias and Stormzy describe him with a string of superiatives — so why do so many people not know his name? As Collier prepares to release his fettrik album, Rolling Stone UK attenues to answer that question.

By Will Richards

Protesting and styling by Jessel Kacharine.







HE TESTIMONIALS WRITTEN about Jacob Cullier from global scars are so in ensely fawning and compounentary has they might seem take if they weren't say a fair mous.

"He's nothing lke I've ever seen before." Stormgy has said, while coldplay's Chris Martin abeded nim " he nest musician in the world". The great Quincy Jones, Collier's de facto manager and early mentor added. "I have never in my life seen a laler-like his."

With co-signs from stars across lazz, popand rap, and as the first British artist to win a Gra pray for each of his first four albums. Collier is one of the most in-demand musicians on the planer. But chances are you may never have heard of h.m.

A 28-year-old mal-instrumental st from London and son of Royal Academy of Music violints) and conductor Suzie Collier, Jacob emerged a decade ago on YouTube, sharing spitt-screen covers of globa, stars including Stevic Wonder In the videos, Comer plays every nstrument and rushes about between their like a tvewire, creating loops and showing incredible dexterity and natural talent on whichever instrument he picks up. These videos were the genesis of a one-man show that Colder but in 2016 and toured the world with, catching the a tention of Quincy Jones, who took Collier under his wing and became his mentor. That same year, lones flew Collier out to the Montreux. Jazz Festival in Switzerland, where he introduced him to Rerbie Hancock.

"Herbie had bought my whole discography on Bandcamp," Collier tells me in his dressing room midway through the Rolling Stone LK photoshoot, glddy dishel ef still permeating his voice. "I got an entall from him, and it said something like. Hey, I've just bought this whose bunch of music and I love it! Where do you live?" In his note alongside the purchase. Hancock told Collier something that has stuck with him in the decade since: "All the best music comes from the best life."



rinusic vossible age,

and he fondly tells a story of picking up the violin at age two after seeing his mother purying it while rocking him on her knee. "Like many people, I realised that I've found myself aspiring to be like tity mum as i've got older. She's a conductor and an extraordinary teacher, but also just an aniazing person. My first memories of human interaction were her teaching people to play the vic. n at my house. I'd come home from school, and she'd be there enabling them, challenging them, duetting with them."

At the age of two or three, Jacob would go and see his mother conduct the orchestra at the Roya, Academy of Music, "It wasn't just a case of her moving her hands up and down." he remembers. "That's the least of the process. it's how she made the orchestra feel that staved with me. At the time I think I thought it was normal. 'Oh, this is normal, this is what people do. They conduct orchestras, and they".. Just come to ide."

Given this background, it's perhaps no surprise to read the fawrung words about Couler from shousands of household names. As we'll as being a supremely talented and virtuosic musician, he understands the essence of conaboration and what to bring to the process. in conversation, he talks as an maledly about communicating past a language barrier and through music with Malian singer Ournou-Sangaré as he does about linking up with SZA to co-write the huge hit 'Good Days' "I get a major idek out of dressing up my universe to the eyes of other people's universes." he says with a smile. "I'm learning through them how I could forge my own ideas differently. I think the biggest kick I can get is the feeling of being a numan and making a connection with other humans. It's something I think that music does ready, really well, but it's much bigger than music as well." Unknowingly echoing Hancock's words to him from a decade prior, he adds: "It's just about being alive."

It's a phrase that permeates every facet of his life "I'm quite a chaotic and colourful person in many ways." Collars says of how his music has gone on to influence his kale.doscopic visual aesthetic, which has evolved to include a collaboration with Crocs, with whom he's about to drop a shoe that is designed entirely by h.m.

Sitting down for our cover interview, he's dressed if anything even more flamboyantly in his own clothes than in the photoshoot outfits, sporting a blue tie-dye ensemble. Sitting next to him are those new custom range of Crocs, which are just as vibrant as he is. It's a wild collab, but one that makes perfect sense in Collers world. Boasting a black base emblacened with brue, ptink and yellow paralleograms and fibbitz featuring a shuttlecock, musical notes, bamanas and truy silver belis on the rear heet. The essentially his musical genius brought to life in physica form.

"When Crocs first came out, my who e faulty were fans, but no one wore them." he beams. "It's come back around now where all the biggest celebrities in the world are wearing Crocs, and I m lapping up 1 love it so much "his is a bit of a dream for me to make a shoe with Crocs."

His continues, "I'm often drawn to patterns that have lost of different colours and patterns and things going on with them and I also jas, see comfortable clothes," he says, "I love loud", love colourful, I also love very subbe patterns with sextares and excharges in them."

a vital cog

p some of the biggest music machines operating loday. In 2021, he was recraited to East Point Studios on Essex's Osea Island as one of Stormzy's collaborators for third album This Is What I Mean. Speaking glowingly of his friend and collaborator, Collier says the differences between him and the Croydon rapper allowed a beautiful working relationship to flourish. "Stormzy is one of these really special people who's achieved a vast amount of success, but has also reached ots of people and been very important in the costare. But with [This is What I Mean' since his hird album, he chose to surround himself with people who, in his eyes, were more qualified than he was to execute his vision," says Collier of the celebrated artist

"That's an incredibly bold, beautiful and humble move," adds Colifer "It's such a joy to see Stormay bring, he fullest version of himself to the table with all these other people who are really different from him. Stormay and I love a act of the same music and were brought up in the same city, but we actually don't have that much in common. It was one of the best forms

of cotaboration I've ever experienced, because of the environment."

The environment, which has been well documented, saw Stormay invite his collaborators to five and work on the Island, and Collier speaks of the rapper saying a prayer every morning before work began for those who were leaving the process and some who were just joining "He did such a good job of curating a really special, creatively open atmosphere, where everyone could bring hings to the lable and parts of themselves. That were outly new You could feel the family spirit of it and a sensitivity.

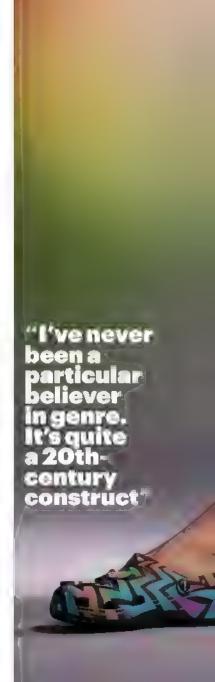
"If think Stormay could have gone out and been even more ballay, forthright and extroverted," Collier mases of his collaborator's mesica, evolution. "But he chose to look inward, which is a beautiful, brazen example for people and artists all over the world. You get to that leve, and are essentially the king of England, and you choose to look inward instead of Justicipi blogger."

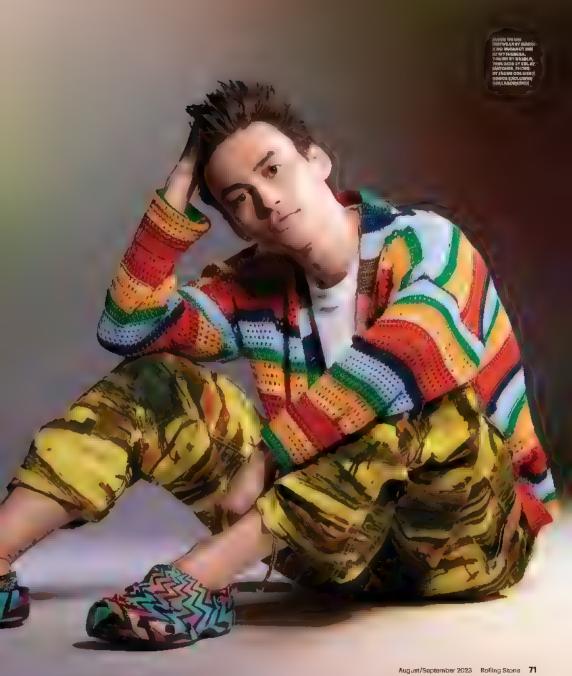
A more spontaneous and ight-hearted codabora, on came last summer when Collect joined Goldpays at their huge Wembley Stadam shows. As he reveals excluedly, Chris Martin who he had cousborated with on Coldplay's song Human Heart' – rang him on the day of the band's first show at the venue and asked him to 8.4 films minute on a series of special guest appearances. If was on a shoot or had a meeting or something," he bughs "Chris said: 'Hey, are you in London, and are you free tonight, because Natabi inbruggla wants to sing 'Forn' all Wembley Stadium?'

"I didn't know the song," Collier adouts, quicky rea Ising how absend that statement is ("It's the biggest panger of all time!" he realises now) and learned the chords on the journey to he stadium. For the next time nights, he joined to apply's specia, guests — Imbrugits, Steve Coogan as A.an Partridge, and Stormay — as they detighted has with an expected performances.

"I just love that feeting of hearg brown into something," he says with a grin. "I deaberately create environments on tour and in my affer where I don't know what the hel.'s going on and I just have to figure it out." Like his mother before him he felt like the glue that knitted the collaborations togo her those three nights, a connective tissue between artists that anowed everyone involved to bring out the best in themselves. It's a true skill, and clearly part of why Colleer is so in-demand

Paralet to this enviable dist of collaborations has been a growing solo career for Collier that has gained him five Grammy nominations including an Album of the Year nod for 2020's Diesse Vol. 3. The Diesse series — a play on Collier's mails—has seen him traverse a vest and intricate network of genres, from classical to jazz, R&B and pop. Jacob's first album In My Room, was a solo mission, but the Diesse project.









a ongoide the writing and production of the music being predominantly made in his music room at home where it all began, involved Jacob nyiting a whole hos, of co.laborators from across the globe

Wild. Djesse Vol. 4 due this year, he's drafting in more collaborators than ever before. Hundreds of housands of them, in fact. At a 2019 show in San Francisco. Colber began an impromptu ritua. that would become a staple of his live shows and a viral sensation, orchestrating the crowd through an improvised and spontaneous cover version, with their voices rising and failing in spine-tingling harmony

"I'd say about 50 per cent of the crowd have an idea of where "lings are going, but it's almost ake the murmuration of birds there's a huge gravitationa, pull to go in a certain direction," Collier says of the process. "Every person who seems to know the right note causes the five people around them to know what the right note is. San Francisco changed the way I thought about people and music. There's an inbuilt

andersunding, and people have a tone, gravity which you can tap into."

Since then, the audience participation has defined Collier's live performances, which he has now expanded from his landed one-man show to incorporate a band due to his longing for an on-stage community. A few days after we speak, he brings the concept to its higgest audience yet on Gastonbury's West Hous stage in a giorious display of collective power

As his reputation grows, and his conaborations continue, Collier is forgling a career as a popistar in his own right. With Diesse Vol. 4 feering like the end of the beginning, what's next for this supreme talent? Does he want to have a radio hit, or to dive deeper into becoming the muso prodigy many have pegged him as? "I can't say really," he smiles, clearly excited by uncertainty and the prospect of infinite possibilities

"I wou do't seem to be interested in natrowing into a gente, because I've never been a particular believer in genre. It's quite a 20th-century construct, and it can be helpful

to some people, but not necessarily to create music, I will probably stubbornly not conform to an idea of genre, but I do think that all sorts of limitations can be immensely valuable. I'm always very interested in different ways to narrow the aperture without decreasing any potential for infinity within that aperture "

He has a similar outlook on fame, with any interest in turning from a critics, choice into a household name binging on keeping his fronclad integrity. "When I was a kid, I didn't dream of being famous," says Couler "[Being famous] feels incredible, because it's proof of the work that you're doing reaching and moving people 1 think the more people I can move in a deep way. the better, but I feel like it doesn't really matter. I ft's three people in a room or three million people on the internet, or 3,000 people in a venue. My job is to perform to the people who are present and who are listening to something that feels ready read something that's ready the and that's bonest to my perspective of the world. If a masteran creates music to become Firmus, he geruinely results in that pusician s worst work."

Chameieon seems to be the perfect word to describe Jacob Collier, who dashes excited vigetween musical styles with abandon, while soaking up all the extra knowledge he can As with everything though, this inspiration comes back to people, whether i, be his A-list collaborators, his mother or the bundreds of June sands of votees on his new album.

"I always does well to put faith in people," Collier says of trusting his audience to join him. eac i night. "I've always believed that if you put faith a someone and you say, 'No, you can do his, you really canfor any scale whether a's a teacher and a student of a friend to a friend, of me to my audience, they can surprise themselves. There's something in people all they need is last a bit of faith in themselves, I put my faith in heat every single night."

Every nigh, on tour in the four years since that show it San Francisco, this fall it has rebut nded into Coafer who is now collaborating on a vast scale and emerging as one of modern music s great polymaths. "There are all sorts of things that people would have experienced on that day that brought them to the venue that night," he says fondly. "Even Tit's just for two or three minutes, the feeling that everybody's unified is wonderful.

"For me, the fact that I'm not actually singing arrything is profound, because I'm just essentially guiding people to express what they already know," he adds, distilling his singuar appeal and the reason why he's a coveted collaborator for so many. It also brings him back to the very start, as he smiles. "It makes me feel like the best of my mam, you know?" 6

THE CROCS X JACOB COLLIER COLLABORATION WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 20 JULY CROCS.CO.UK

ARITEN INTHE SIARS

The first woman to win Eurovision twice makes Loreen an artist who will go down in music history. Rolling Stone UK meets the curious Libra to talk winning the world's biggest song contest and the inspirational generations of women in her family who all said "Fuck, no" to men

AV CHARLOTTE MANNING PHOTOGRAPHY BY AZAZEL STYLING BY ANASTASIA BUSCH



LOREEN



GET TO SIT down not once, but twice, with Loreen, all in the space of a week. Our time together has done my soul a lot of good, she's a calming influence. The first thing you need to know about the Swedish pop star is that spirituality is everything to her This a.so leads to the Libra quickly trying to guess the star sign of every

crew member on set for her Rolling Stone UK

I am scheduled to delve into the enigma that is Loreen right at the end of a frankly deutious day on set (soundtracked almost entirely by FKA Twigs and Pa Salleu's benger 'honda'). But everything runs well over, and as a planned eight hour day quickly slips into it hours she a pretty exhausted. Consequently, our interview is rescheduled to take place at her London hotel at the weekenst.

When I meet her for a second time it feels we a huge intake of fresh air Turrive at King's Cross, albeit 10 minutes late, but 1 am soon enveloped by an overwhelming sense of caim. Loreen is sittling in the lobby of The Standard, London hoter drinking a slightly tepid cup of Earl Greytea. This time she is dressed down in an alblock ensemble. She instantly recognises me when I arrive and a ter giving me a hug, she is desperate to know what wire going to falk about. We settle one everything

My first big question is how have the past few weeks been for her? "I've been going from it feeling surreal, What happened? to this overwheiming, bappy feeling," she says "Fevery now and then, I Just "hink, "What the fuck Just happened? Did we seriously win that? I feel a lot of gratitude Life is Just ... so interesting A year back, if somebody told me, "You're going to be on Eurovision, and you're going to win, 2d probably laugh my ass off, and say "That is never going to appen. No, I don't think so." But life changes so fast, I can hardly believe it Now I'm here in London, doing what i love the nost meeting new people. You, and everybody, and

creating music. What the fuck, man?"
Loreett, a name now so synonymous with burovision, never watched the sing ng event, or its Swedash feeder, Melodifestiva.en, as a chi.d. "We had three channels and I did it know anything about Melodifestiva.en or Eurovision," she says. "I Just knew at some point in my life, very late, though, that I wanted to work with music. I was just trying to find my way wherever I went." Loreen, 39, has now compeled in the Swedish Eurovision selection process four times, making it through twice, and winning both times. Impressive stuff. Her determination means her name will, forever.

appear in pop music history books.

In the light of her with, it seems incredible that Loreen was at first reluctant about a possible return to Eurovision. So much so that she originally turned down the idea of using fiery pop arithem "Tattoo" for Meiodifestivaten after being sent a demo. How different things could have been "I was afraid," she admits "That was Just my luitial reaction, when asked to return to Melodifestivaten, because everything went so fast for us. Pirs, there was a song, and I loved the song. There was no taking about Melfest. If was just a beau. (it song and I wanted to release."

From all directions, she was firmly nudged into entering it, in what tirred out to be her fourth whirl at Me odd fest valen "fin ally, I said, 'No, no, no, no!' I usually do that when I don't know the purpose of why I'm do ng something. I said no, because I needed time to figure things out When I say time to figure things out, what I mean is, I need to understand why I do things."

Everything that happens in Loreen's life acts as a test, she believes. The prospect of a Eurovision return is a prime example. "What is the story? What can I give you guys? Is this meant for me to do? If you re at a crossroads are you going to go right? Or are you going to go left? You can't really rush into that. That's why I said no. I said no for a while. I just thought, "How do I navigate this?"

As time passed signs that it was the right thing to do started to appear "They were beautiful, beautiful signs. The first was the song, the second sign was the people that I trusted around me - they were so happy whenever I said, "Yes" There were so many positive things happening. People were happy and curious That's why I said yes basically."

A strong sense of purpose flows through everything Loreen does. When she competed in Azerbaijan back in 2012, a country marred by its questionable human rights record, she was the only entrant to meet local human rights activists. She told reporters: "Human rights are vlolated in Azerbaijan every day One should not be silent about such things." An Azerbaijan government spokesman responded critically, calling for the contest to not "be politicised" and demanded the EBL (European Broadcasting Lnion) prevent such meetings. But Swedish diplomats stayed firmly on Loreen's side. They reputed that the EBL, the Swedish broadcaster SVT and Loreen had not acted against the connection's rules.

"What I experienced in Liverpool, I didn't experience in Azerbaijan," she explains. "The vibe was completely different Azerbaijan was tense. The dictator litham Aliyev, who's been in power since 2003, was so annoyed by men's he laughs, clearly revelling in recauling how she upset the higher powers of the 2012 host country. Her whole delegation was effectively put on house arrest. "My security said, "We hink you should stay in the hote!", because Allyes was very annoyed by me doing all these things. Me and my producer, we celebrated. All of us in the delegation just said, its he amonyd? Cheers!" as she mimics clunking slasses.

OREEN IS RISEXLAD, and came out pulling in a TV increase with Swedish pulling in a TV increase with Swedish resenter. Renée hyberg in 2017. Eurovision and the LGBTQ- community have strong tass. Previous LGBTQ- contestants and winners such as trans star Dana international, drag queen Conchita Wurst and Duncan Laurence have all found success in the competition. Loreen loves her queer fans dearly, too. The Europortal singer told hyberg at the mie: "Many people are so focused on sex on sexuality. Love is so much more. I usually say 'Love is where you find fr." When asked

"Every now and then, I just think, 'Did we seriously win that?'"





LOREEN



to clarify whether this meant she identifies as bisexual. Loreen said she "quite simply" was

onsurprisingly her LGBTQ+ fans message her all the time. "I absorately love that Queer or not queer, I don't see that, I just see us as people with certain attributes. Than's why I say these are my people. We have the same number. The thing is, If somebody asked me, What is freedom, what is feeling free?" That is just doing exactly what you feel like expressing yourself exactly the way you want to express yourself clothe yourself, alk the way you want to talk Don't care about what other people, hink. This is the recogn."

She goes on passionately. "This community, we know what freecom is about and what this feels like. If you compare it to another community, who cothers are tricks and regulations... where someone says, 'You need to talk this this' that's a fucking fail I cannot do that. For me, when someonedy says, 'You are weld' to me, that's [them saying that I'm fee."

"We rd" is how Loreon describes nerself as a child. "I was just a weird kid. I preferred my own company" she reculs. Her clid root wasniteasy She's one of six kids, raised by a single mum. "I was raised to a big family. A lot of siblings, a lot of rielping Motare out because she was alone, trying to make ends meet. We didn't law much."

Growing up "poor" led her to start quesion in the property of the poor of the

This characteristic continues to be a key component in her personality and outlook on life. As well as star signs, she loves nature and meditading. She even has a house she can take horself away to on the remote Swedish isia id of Godand.

Although Loreen was born in Sweden, her parents are both Moroccan and moved to Sweden in their teens. These roots and teritage, she says, are a buge spiritua influence too. "I know what suffering feels like if you've been in pain, and allowed yourself to be in pain, or life has given you painfu situations, at some point, when you see another person in pain? Goof, I can fee that, and I know what you're going through, I can imagine what you're going through. That's why you can't stop from reacting."

Loreen comes across as a strong woman and, as it transpires, is descended from a long line of hem. This sense of light from within feels like it was deal feel to leave a dramatic mark on Loreen's trajectory before she was even born. It's taken a white for her to appreciate her rich cultural history in its fighess, but it opens up the chance for the most incredible part of our uterview.

"The women from my mother's mother's side, hese are real warriors. His orically he women from my tribe, they're called Berber" She explains that this word comes from Barbarian', and adds: "They were called Barbarians by the Egyptians because they were so aggressive. The women were so aggressive Isn't that interesting?" Sae smiles: "The women from my lifhe, they weren't so interested in monogamy, but being in a relationship. Historically they went out to the village in search of a man. You're coming with me." right? They did whatever they wanted to do Then they said, Ta-ta, and hey russed their children by themselves. This whole concept of husband and wife was never a concept. They used these women in war because they were ke Abahbahin

This energy is "generational" Loreen confirms, but that seemed obvious from the get-go, and is especially reflective, she says, through her grandmother. "My great grandmother all of these women, they had a life presented to them They were told, "This is what your life is going to be like, by men, but I islead they were ke, back, not They fought for their freedom My grandmother, she owed her usband He ded in the war. They wanted her to marry someone of set so what does the blich do? She says, Fack, no."

Loreen hen el's me how, while dressed as a man "with a kufhan and everything" to avoid suspicion, her gra idmother fied to a different city with her two children and her tiousekeeper in tow. "I have pictures of her at home, seriously! She self everything behind dressed as a man, so a la lobody would fortice her She had a cousin in the next city opened up a store, still dressed as a man, di alse got fucking oid. She raised those two children by herself with some heip from her cousins and never married again. I have a picture of her, she didn't stop wearing maie clothes until she died. The saftan, he hat the gold tooth. That was hardcore from we granting."

Lorent's mun had her when she was Just 16. Before that, she too was told to marry, and tike her mother before her, also Led her family home "They told her, 'You're going to marry because we're poor 'This man, he's twice your age, or thee times your age, or thee times your age, but he's good for you.' Again, she says, 'Fuck, no.' It's passed



LOREEN

on through generations Without knowing the language, without ever going to school, without even knowing how the world works." Her mother grew up believing there were only Juree countries in the world. Germany, France and Spain.

The unravel.Ing of these stories leads her o repeat my fetbal question back on new "So how was it, raised by these wome? It's a lot of pressure!" she laughs, "They have a lot of expectations of me. Like, girl, you better step up your game, change something in the world it's crazy to see what women can do. Women are so much more powerful, stronger than men are 'The 's why we can have babies and shit like that, just saying!"

It's not last the women in her family who provide inspiration, but "all women within he industry that stand their ground" she tells me. "You can tell when women are standing heir ground and not buying into the whole concept of what a woman's supposed to be I'm not saying that womer aren't supposed to be sexy. Grace Jones, for Instance, she owns her sexuality. She can run around haked. She's still doing it! There are so many, not even just in the industry. All women inspire mel because they're taking positions for the next generation, they're balancing things up, it's necessary and it's nevitable, it's going to happen. The shift is going to happen, and men will take a step back. The thing is, they're longing for it, because July're messing thangs up. 1

OREEN'S E. ROVIS ON V CTORY Was Sweden's seventh with, and it means the man street of the competition on the 50th anniversary of Abba's 1974 with. Many fans are begging the group to make a triamphant tetarn to the sage, but after Abba revently created the Voyage experience featuring awa are of the neelves, surely that atmoshis to a see berate act to make sure they never have to perform again? Loreen is convinced they will be at the event. If I were a bookmaker. I'd feel melined to back her on this.

"They re going to be there," she insists. "Maybe not all of them, but they won't miss it I promise. How old are they? They all have their own lives. They haven't really played together in a while. But I'm pretty sure that some of them will be here. Don't eithern I old you!"

Before she returns to Eurovision again. There's a giant 2023 in store for Loreen. With tickets for her Tattoo Tour selling out in literally seconds, it seems she's going absolutely nowhere ".'ve been waiting for this tour for years," she exclaims. "My fans are like, 'Can you please come to England? Can you please come to England? Can you please come to Spain? Can you please come to France?" and now



I'm coming! Flually, I'm doing this, and with every hing that's happened with "Tattoo", It's just a perfect time. I mionging for it I've longed for it for many years. So it's going to be ulce. I'm a people's person, I just want to connect."

I point out that there's no better way for an artist to connect with all their fans than taking themselves on tour "Yeahl because the gather" she notes. "They're there because they want to be there, and I'm there because I want to be there, and I'm there because I want to be there. It's effortiess," Loreen is a ready full of ideas. She is, after reminds me, "a broody creative" after all. "I'm working with the same team that I did "Tattoo" with It depends on the venues, but I's going to be a visual performance, obviously "

She's heading straight to the studio after our interview. "I haven't released that much

music over the years." but she promises that absolutely will, change. "Now there's a shult going on, there's going to be a lot more releases, which is nice. This year and next year My medium, she told me that!" A move to London is alkery, too, "I think it's actually going to happen. I'm pretty sure. Helio, London't don't know what it is, but it's almost like the Uk is a creative nub." Her top picks of LK artists to work with? Labrinth and Burna Boy. Watch this space.



DREACED ACRUS IN SIRVER PARAMETONIN'S PRETURES.

Anything is (Im)possible

As she joins the *Mission: Impossible* juggernaut for its seventh instalment, *Dead Reckoning Part One*, leading lady Hayley Atwell reveals what it's like to learn the art of filmcraft from Tom Cruise and how she is redefining what success means to her

By Christina Newland



HETHER BHE IS slow-dancing with Captain America to wartine big band music at Avergers. Endgane, taking to the London stage in adaptations of Henrik Ibsen and Snakespeare, or hanging off a Venetian bridge by her ankies in a high-octaine action sequence for Mission-Impossible's latest two-parter Dead Reckoning, Hayley Atwell has proven herself a force on screen, transcending leading ady' stereotypes and proving herself a more-than-worthy foll to the men acting opposite her

When we char, Atwell, a fresh from a ong workout - she's grown used to training every pair of her body not simply for aeathetics but for the strength and injury avoidance that your years of practical stunt-work opposite. Tou Cruise might require. She pushes her curtain of dark hast off her neck and says breezdy that she's "Is a "shirt like a saventy toe tager", but she kooks, as you might expect, as lovely as ever. She's a garrulous and cheerful conversationalist, odicting up an anecdote on the surreality of making a movie wise Mission: Impossible:

"At one point, they said to us, "We really won't you to have, a seep ence where you, and Tom run with each other, and you're going to be hander, ifed to my And you'll be in heets. On the streets of Rome? I was the "I'm running next to Mr Movie Running Man. The fronto Tom Crusse run!" she says. Even she, at times, seems to find it distinct to get her head around it as.

Playing an enigmatic new contracter inamed Grace opposite Tom Gruße's Ethan Hant with shifting motives the make her both a source of fascination and of danger, Atwell describes Grace as "an absolar alone wolf The idea that anyone would come to her and work with her, she is thinking: What is the agenda? So every move that she makes, she upends Ethan Which has a beautiful coinedic chemistry to it," says Atwell.

The story of Atwed's involvement began a decade ago, when Christopher McQuarrie, the American writerdirector responsible for Jack Reacher and the successfu. fifth instalment of the Mission. Impossible franchise, Rogue Nation, had eccording to Atwell, been ito see a play that I was in, in the West End in London. And he took me out for dinner afterwards and said, 'What you, can do on that stage. I want to bottle it and I want to put It in a moyle."

and I want to put it in a movie."

From first meeting McQuarrie,
Atwell says, "I came away just
thinking that he's increably
erudite. His understanding
of structure and character
development was
ke
alking to a theatre nerd;
he understood craft I
had me, him and
Tom a other screen
tests, with other
things that dido I
come my way. So,
when I got a can,
saying, You

know, they're looking for a new leading ady for the next two *Mission: Impossible* films . It was amazing."

After a raft of screen tests and choreography tests where it is, int coordinate its would try to earn where Atwells natura, abilities and centre of gravity were, the process was about fooding her talents into a role, in a way of reverse-engineering the part. As Atwell explains, "The team wanted someone that comes in and embraces the work eithle of always searching, of

going and trying ou. 10 different things and seeing what feets most alive. It takes courage to know the the trajectory and the journey of the character will change throughout he process."

This is a somewhat different tack arom what most actors, fine tiding Atwell, might be accustomed to, But a quick gianco at her acting resume shows har there was never a type. Although she has a classic raven unred beauty which has predisposed her.

to being cast in period

films and elevision serves, from a turn In Howard's End to her asting impact as the strong-willed Agent Peggy Carter in Agent carter she bas regularly andercut any 'English Rose delineation with a tough frankness and destre to get her hands dirty. "My friend Deborah Francis White, who rans the podcast The Guilty Feminist, save there's a test called the 'Full killer Test It's when in a movie with a strong male protagonist, the woman is seen as the moral compass, the emotionally mature one who doesn't want the man to, say go off to war If the protagonist does what she wants. you don't have a film," she points out And even with the no-fun killer rule and all the action adventure-based materia. Atwell has under her be t. Mission Impossible is a markedly different kind of big-budget summer blockbasier. "There's so much hat happens in post-production with CGI on Marve. But with the mythology and legacy of Mission, and of Tom's reputation, it's all about making it practical and mechanica, and rea. There's no CGI in sight. There are no wires there. It's not the superhero world, the audience have to feel that hese human beings can break bones, as indeed Tom did." Atwell explains.

The importance of learning every elemen of he art of filmmaking was key to the experience, on, making for an unusually porous film set where every aspect of the field was studied "I was invited into every production meeting. Tom was the 'The whole process will be demyselfied for you! We did camera tests where he would show me that if the camera. for example, was slightly above me, it created his sense of pressure, and the sense of maid ig her more valuerable," Atwell says, "Then it you put the camera slightly below me, I am a bigger presence in the frame, and it puts me in a post ton of power withour having to do anything, no acting required. It's just about composition of the frame - so it was like an ongoing workshop and a masterclass to study film technique "

As an extension of that, the two actors and he director also watched a number of films. logether - some of which were surprising choices: 70s classics of the helst and the caper genres were among the most common Afwell lats, including The Thomas Crown Affair The Sting, and The Taking of Pelham (33. Ba she also ment ons more romantic, battle of the sexes films like What's Ln. Doc? and Ordinary Propie, suggesting, perhaps, something of he spirit of her feisty onscreen dynamic with Baran Hami

It makes Ativel; well ha red with he likes of the no-orlowsly thorough Cruise that she is a refreid to la klabout influences and craft, a subject actors often shy from for lear of pretension. It's reflective of the fact that the variety in her work is rich, and that she can apply her training to a staggering number of projects, "I don't believe in, sort or, highbrow and lowbrow, or that an action franchise has any more or less value than a classical play-They're all different art forms. But they're all contributing to the culture," she says

When it comes to stun choreography a lot of my drama school training was very much about training the body, understanding a sense of neutrality, which is through things like the Alexander Technique, If you are in alignment with a posture where your core is holding you up, you can then later adopt certain different centres of gravity within your body that capture characteristic choices." she explains.

"So when it came to the actual stunt, it

was Wade Eastwood and his brilliant stunt team.

ALC: UNKNOWN

they would show me a choreographed fight scene And then I would give it a go. And then they break it down movement by movement," she says. "I jumped backwards off a moving train and almost fell onto the tracks. I'm doing the spilis there at one point. But I'm not sure it makes | into the movie " she adds, casually

Still, her Mission Impossible dream role wasn't only about the physical challenges It also meant Atwel would have to face the fearsomery hot glow of abiold attention around one of the World's Biggest Movie Stars'9. "I remember once asking Toml, 'If this movie comes out, it might mean I'l get an inflow of energy from the outside world digging around in things that are not of their concern, because they're wanting to get a story or, you know giving me blockhanded compliments about how Look," she recalls.

"I would go to him with cer ain agestions or ask, hypothetically speaking, What would I do?' And he said 'Hayley you know who you are And I know who I am. If people are going to say whatever they regoling to say, we're not in control of that. But if you have integrily. and the people ground you who love you was things for you and not from you, then everything else you can let go."

Atwell seems extraordinarily al peace with the noise, and appropriated remarks, "It's socontradictory to laboud startes, I can see with Tom that his soul is intact. He's really kind. I ve been working with the guy for four years and you can't sustain that If it a not real But he loves it. He loves being a movie star, and he wears. Lifec a loose garment."

Arwel., too, seems blessed with a self assurance and polse that perhaps comes from his same inner well of strength. "I think I've been around long enough now, so I Kind of have the privilege of gening older and have been in he ladustry 17 years. I know now to and after more, f through these things," she says. After all the stressors and delays of shooting an enormous production during a gioba, pandemic - and the long and wind ng road it has taken to finally reach audiences you'd hink she might want to rest. But A well doesn't seem to be taking a long pause. She's

back in production this summer after a whirlying international press tour for Dead Reckoning, Part One, "I ve decided that despite the scheduling, I want to give myself a pat on the back for the work no one ease will see, which is about my evolving understanding of success. Did , achieve what I set out to do? Did I give it my all? Because anything that

comes after that is not my business. And that's quite a liberating stance to take " @



JUNGLE

After 10 years on the scene. Tom McFarland and Josh Lloyd-Watson, the UK duo behind dance act Jungle, are displaying a newfound confidence. As they release Volcano - their second record from their own label -- it's clear that they are feeling free to experiment with collaborators and their creativity is pouring forth

By Fred Garratt-Stanley

VISION



NSIDE A ETUDIO in an industrial

outside. Tom McFarland, who created Jungle in 2013 alongside chadhood friend, febour producer, wicabst and first namen ausglost Lloyd Warson, is numing drough the creative journey behind their

running drough the creative journey behind their transform fourth studio album. Vocume. It soon becomes clear that detail is important for the duo

"We set ourse yes big challer ges, in the studio, on stage, during the visual process of realising everything, and i think it reality pays dividends. If we were hist like 'Co, into a studio, rigge a song, let someone else make the video, turn up and play it live and then go home again that's just not the all-encompassing experience we want from being in the mustic adustry."

This exhaustive approach has been the driving force behind jungle's global success scan the comments below any of their valeos on You'l'ube and you. Do struck by the jassion and emotional attachment tans in every corner of the world feet towards the pair. The feverish sense of hype and intrigue that surrounded their early releases (when the fresh, powerful sound of tracks like 2013's 'Busy Earna' and 'Time was only intensified by the fact that the pair loosely obscurred their own identities) has been gradually replaced by a firmer bond. And that's a reflection of how hard McFarland and Loyd Wassoi work or every loch of their art.

As they've become more confident, Jungle have connected with people on a deeper level 2021's 'Keep Moving' provided fans with an upleat post-pandemic antidote, while last year's follow-up double-single 'Good Times/Problema' strengthened the striking cinematic world that the due have been developing

Visuals are central to the journey, from the release of 'Busy Earuin' to the unveiling of two brand-new narra, (ve driven pieces ('Dominoes' and 'Candle Flame') in the run-up to Vokano. their music videos have consister been structured around explosive, intricately choreographed dance performances. As McFarland and Lloyd-Wasoon have taken jungle from an exciting bedroom-pop out-it to one of the most respected global dance music acts of the past decade, this visual element of their mass has remained central throughout

"I think it's just about building that world for us," says McFarand. "It's a visual world, it's a sonic world, and the live show is a measive part of that, too. It feels to me like we've created this kind of we'rd, modern electronic, funk souled, seo, dance opera... It makes us quite emotional seeing the songs realised in such an amazing way by these amazing dancers.

"Working with people is fun, it's exciting," he continues. "It gives us a much deeper perspective on what we're doing because you can get lost in your own head and wrapped up it your own emotions, and I think actually when someone comes in and sheds a bit of agint on a different corner of the room, it gives you energy to paint the rest of it."

That applies to the dance element of the project, but it also reflects probably the most norther recent shift in Jungle's musical output a much herefee emphase on collaboration. It is something we were probably a "Rife bit scared doling early doors," explains McFarland, "We didn't necessarily have the conflict one in who we were or what we were doing. Collaborating with other people, especially with music, is the only way you're gonna learn, the only way you're gonna progress. We dipped our toe into the features water on the third record, but now! I thus we've gots confirme a file, but more meanings."

The piethora of artists heard on Volcano as impressive. There's a verse from Brooklyn MC Erick The Architect on "Gand e Flame that takes the sorig to a whole new sevel"; a bucket list ticking feature from segendary UK rapper Roots Manuva on the rocking, raggae-taged '1 as Ain't No Gerebrity', and a reappearance from US rapper and prior collaborator Bas on Pretty Little Thing, a poignam album closer structured wround soft acoustic guitar and pitet ed apslightly patised sopration vocal clippings. On top of that, there are regular contributions from close friend and collaborator Lydia Kitta, whose stunning vocals are neard across the protect.

"I don't think we've ever really seen ourselves as storytellers in our lyrics, but working with artists who are storytellers and whose modus operand is to tell a story every time they turn the m.c on, it's definitely giving us a bit of incentive to go and do that a little bit more ourselves," says McFarland. For now, though, they re happier that ever to take a back seat and ist, their collaborators shine.

"This album is definitely trying to take the pressure off us as the main performers Essentially, we're directors and producers, not necessarily artists, and being able to provide a platform for other people to give us their artistry and show the world their art stry as well has been really special for us, it's like that age-old thing of hating the sound of your own voice when you're recorded ralking, and actually, when someone else is doing that for you, it's really exciting and it feels ready fresh."

Volcano s gnals another departure in that it features hast one sample - the galler lick from Goria Taylor's How Can You Say It', on new single Dominioes' Warm and fuzzy, verdistant, the song's vocal hook exudes a kind of soulfulness you rarely hear outside the Mot sen records or the 60s and 70s. The rest of the a burn is equally bursting with the grains, melodic magk of oid-school disco and soul, and the energy of the NOs Chicago house scene N gave way to. That's no accident - having created a "space where we can go and do anything". Jungle are constantly striving to expand their creative process, and on Volcana, giving new recordings a heavy splash of retro colour was a centra, part of that

"It's a process we've been trying to perfect over the years," says Mckaramd. "The idea of samp ing, the aesthetic that if gives you, has always been massively important to us. The process is a nosi endless, and you can go down so many avenues. For us, it's that Liftimate challenge of How about we don't sample? How about we create this vision that is completely ours from too to bottom?"

However, McFar and and Lloyd Watson didn't always have the creative control to be

"This album is definitely trying to take the pressure off us as the main performers. Essentially, we're directors and producers"

of artistic freedom

abie to make these kinds of decisions. But since establishing their own label, Catola Records on which they released 2021 album Loving in Stereo, as well as Volcano they ve enjoyed a new sense

"We can iterally do whatever the fuck we want which is pretty rate in Die masic industry," says McFarland, half aughing, "No one's sitting there going 'You' haven't got enough TikTok followers' or 'You' re not posing enough on instagram. The last two records have felt so good to us because we're not being asked to make singles or make more songs or do dhis ar do that it's just given us carte blanche.

to ramove over-analysis and overthought from what we do has been a really key part of that."

McFarland's examination of the recora's electronic emphasis is spot on while there are some meliow moments in Voicano. It's packed with tracks that would pop off in a nighticial. 'Hoiding On' is built around a pumping house beat, with searing, distorted vocals from vocalist Andreya Triana. 'Us Against the World' is such a striden, super-lunky call-to-arms - described by McFarland as probably "the first time we've explored how we feel about the world, about society" - that it's empossible not to bop your head to it. Largely written on the Loving in Series.



"If we find an artist that we love, let's make a track with ment. But we don't wanna become the thing that we're trying to get away from I would never want to try and have another artist's destuny in our own hands, because we've been there before, and we ve seen how it can be damaging. So, we're definitely going to stay clear of becoming, he man."

When working with the likes of Lydia Kito, Roots Manava and JNR Williams on Volcano, spontaneity was essential For McFarland, there are no regrets over Jungle's past, but he concedes that hey did get "hogged down" by atms and expectations when creating second album For Ever, released in 2018. Alongside the broader sonic vision, their new album is shaped by a relissa to overthink things.

"It's Just about speed, speed of idea, speed of execution," says McFarkand. "Loving in stereo was the first step towards actually becoming much more creatively free almost being as creatively free as we were on the first record. On Voicano, we've taken that and max inseed it. There's so much energy on this record, it feels a little bit more DI-ed', for want of a better word. We wanted it to feel modern and exciting and we wanted it to fielding slap on the speakers, and that's something we've really achieved. Trying to negate and trying

tout, with early demos recorded on makesoff production stations backstage, it's an album that untethers the confident, dance-centric energy of heir third a burn and takes things to the next evel

Those new tracks are a long way from the soft, brooding synths and narmor ised hums of early efforts like 'Crumbler' and 'Drops', but this new side of the production duo has been there for a while now. Primarily, the dancefloor vibes reflect the fact that right now, the main purpose of Jungle is simple: having fun. And in live settings, that in sention is paying off.

"I think the visceral response that we have now as much stronger," says McFarland. "In the early days, there was a certain amount of people wa ting to be entertained. It was ke "You've done this on the record, can you do it live?", or "Who the fuck are you?" So, actually, the treaction was mostly surprise of shock, like. "This is better than I thought it was gomna be?" Now that we've been doing this for 10 years, and people have attached themselves to the music and the group, there's a much more visceral reaction. I/ve, and we've gotta play to that we've gotta amp (it up."

How do they do that? "For us now, it's about del vering things that people know in

a different way. We can't just go out and play

a different way. We can't just go out and play Busy Earnin' the way that we've played it for 40 years. It's gotta be changed and I think that's a really exciting challenge for us, how can we uplift some of those oid songs and old emotions into the new sonic space that we're heading towards? Simple Jings like changing the tempo, trying to match tempos to create a continuous stream of music. We're not just a band that stands on stage and plays some funk songs, josh



and I are producers, we're directors, and I think what people are going see from the I we show is something much more along those lines, but also with the added thrensity and dynamic of real people playing instruments."

The duos move towards a more fluid live experience stems from the fact that they we been Djing much more regularly over the past couple of years. Their increased focus on this side of their artistry is also a driving factor.

behind Voicano being their most electronic sounding album to date. But as McFarland rotes, it wouldn't really be Jungle. If this sonic shift didn't also come with its own challenges.

For now, the key lask on the horizon is getting ready for All Points East. Its significance len't cost on McFarland and Lloyd-Waison, as they pian the concert in intricate detail. It'd offer them the chance to test ideas and gear up for an autumn tour that't lask them across Europe and

North Americal Crucially, the date will also be a homecoming gig

"Playing in London is so special. Being from London, 18's a marquee moment. It's always nerve-wracking, but it's always exciting, it makes you want to make it super specia. It's go hard or go home for us." •

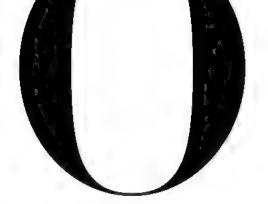
VOLCANO WILL BE RELEASED VIA CAIOLA RECORDS ON 11 AUGUST

THE GREATEST COMEBACK

ATTHE START OF THE SOS, THAT URNERWAS BROKE, ON THE RUN FROM IKE, AND PLAYING CHLESY CONVENTIONS, HEREIS THE INSIDE STORY OF HER MIRACL LOUS SECOND ACT BY DAVID BROWNE

THAT ALMOST WASN'T





TINATURNER

begin with. Only a series of happy accidents, combined with her unbridled belief in herself, would save her

Y THE START of the 80s, it was hard to nagine an even remotely bright future for Tina Turner For many years, she'd been a star, fronting a band with like that raced like a locomotive through the poplandscape. Ann Bullock had wanted to be a purse, but after meeting like and his band, the Kings of Rhyrhm, at a nightclub in St. Louis, Barrock was reborn, eventually renamed by her soon-to-be-buseand as Tiga Turner

The .wo had a handful of kw8 hits before crossing over to the rock world, thanks in part to opening for the Rolling Stones and remaking rock hi s ike 'Proud Mary' and 'Honky Tonk Women' in their own brassy, soul-rev valstyle like may have been the guitarist, boss, and pandicader, but a leves were on his wife, who had the throaty, sensua, delivery of a great gosnel or blues singer and unit infitted dance moves unlike almost anything seen in pop-Her version of Olis Redung's The Been Loving You Too Long', which found her stroking her microphone, was undentably erotic, and Turner herself was arguably the first mater Black female. POCK BLAC

NE DAY in Kensington, London, in .983. Ting Turner's resurrection finally appeared within reach. The prior decade is a been one of stage-shaking mamphs, personal high mares, various degrees of mort sice ion, and now, a chance at possible redemption. But as musicion and producer Mar yn Ware soon learned. Turner's past was never in the rearview mirror and on that day, it was terrifyingly in her face

The previous year. Turner had sung on an edgy, pulsating remake of the Tempiations hit. Ball of Confusion', and now Ware who had co-helined that track, had co-founded the Human League, and was a member of Heaven 17 - was meeting with her to map out another collaboration. Arriving at what he recalls as "a beautiful kind of mar son" where Turner was staying. Were took note of security guards ou side. To his shock, Ware says, he was told that Turner's ex-hus-and-like, who had previously served 30 days for drug possession and wasn't averse to shooting at the newspaperdelivery guy or making threats on his wife's life, was in the city and caming: he was apparently drying to scale the walls of the milding to de hand money from Tina. "It was still going on them," Ward says. "And I thought, "That is having to dear with this on a continuous basis." She aid everything with such grace, poise, and good humour. She must have been hurting underneath it al.,"

Ultimately, Turner and Ware decided to make over Al Green's 'Let's Stay Together'. The rack would be the next step on the road to Private Dancer, the 1984 album that would reestablish

Turnet as a trusteal force and a public symbol. for overcoming crushing personal adversity. "I tatak people actually go and see her not for the songs necessarily - they go to see her for what she represents," her friend David Bowle would later say. "The baggage of her past travels with her, and they're going to see somebody who lke a phoenix from the ashes has risen. .. She's certainly been through far worse than many of as have been through "

Civen how much she was embraced by old admirers, the MTV generation, and the Industry the holy-grall triumvirute in the trusic business at the latte. 'Turner's comeback should have been a cakewalk. Once the builds tearned what she'd endured with ike, by way of a People Interview in 1981, there were few popstars more beloved. But the jarring reemergence of her ex-husband on an otherwise productive day in England would be far from the only hurdle in one of pop's most unexpected returns Even then, with the world cheering her on, Turner's second act was never a given. At any moment, it could have been detailed by ageism, sceptics who wondered if she could make it on her own, music never released in her home country, and at least one racist music executive Triggered in part by memories of life with Ike, she almost tripped herself up by not wanting to revisi, the music that had made her a star to



DRESS FOR SUCCESS. Appearing in unforgettable outlits was all part of the show for Tine, seen here performing in Chicago on 29 January 1983



At the tipse, few knew the horrors of her life stage and in studios with her abusive and womanising husband. "Ike was beating me with phones, with shoes with the hangers," she relayed it her first memoir, I, Tina. "Choking me punching me - It wasn't just slapping anymore." Right before one show, he puriched her so hard that he broke her jaw, and she had to still go onstage and sing. In 1976, at age 36, she left him and found herself raising four children while drowning in an ocean of deb-To earn a living, she took any work she could on cheesy TV variety shows and in Vegas, where she resorted to covers of dance hits like Disco inferno', during one dinner me show, she accidentally dropped her thic into a customer's steak. "Suddenly the booking agents didn t hink I had the ability to work without lke," she sald. "It was like starling over again."

Turner's relaunch began just as the 80s began and in the first of many such examples, it almost failed. R&B and disco were out. New Wave was in, and Turner again was musically adrift Roger Davies, a young Australian manager, decided to see one of her regular gigs. two shows a night at the Venetian Room at the

FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES Time Turner performing with the Rolling Stones in New Jersey during the band's tour of America in 1981. After her death, Jagger celled her en "enormously (stanted performer"

Fairmont clotel in San Francisco in 1980. At first, Dayles was underwhelmed by the garishness of her show, which included Turner in gaudy Bob Macide dresses, four backup dancers, and covers of standards, the 'Fever Review ig her opening night, the Oakland Tribune wrote that Turner's show was "geared to the vis. ng conventioneer crowd*

Bur luckfly for Turner Davies stayed for the whder second set "People were standing on tables," he recalled in I, Tina "The chande lers were shaking." Before long, and with Turner's consent. Davies fired two of her dancers and hired new musicians. "She wanted to rock," says drummer lack Bruno, one of the new recruits. "There were other tunes she would bring and but her touch on, which usually meant faster tempos. That was her signature thing, how she made songs her own." To save money, the new musicians were outfitted in marching black

garate sults enstead of the more costly takedos of the previous lineup). "The was the musician, the rap, eader the director the bus was manager," Turner said in 1981. "Now, that falls on the That part is hard. I must make decisions I didn' have to make be, are "

As she told ko; Inc. Stone at the time, "t want to get back into the rock of itt" Turner. was still without a record deal and longed to be on par with the biggest bands of the time "She wanted to be up there with the Stones and be mainstream and have hits of her own," save Ann Bebriager, one of her backup dancers and singers during this period and with Davies help, that goal began taking shape. Rod Stewart invited her to join him on Saturday Night Live, and Turnet opened for the Stones in New Jersey

During those early days of her rebirth, Furner self packed her ser with the era singles like 'Proud Mary' and River Deep, Mountain High But she often opened with a new add tion to her repertoire her own version of Stewart's sleazy deep cut 'Foolish Behavior', renamed 'Kill' His Wife The lytics alone were startling: "Why I wanna kill my wife? I have this urge to take her life Been planning for years to get rid of her Not



TINATURNER

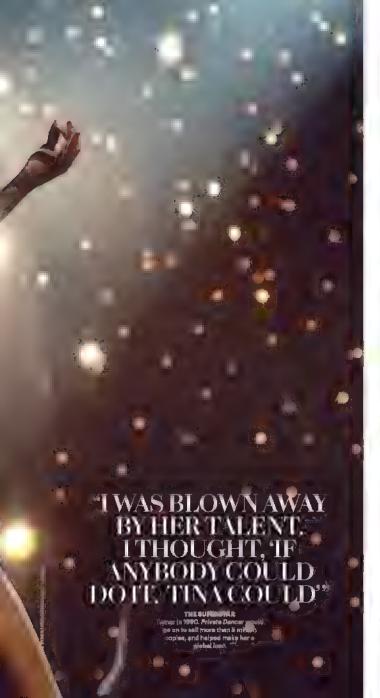
divorce, I really do mean to kin her" During the instrumental break. Turner look the intensity one step further by grabbing a shocking propa noose, which she twirled around like a lasso.

Bruno felt that Turner was going for something stagey. "I'm not sure about her thought process, but she liked the theatrics of it," he says. "The audience was polite'y appliedding, but they didn't know what to think " Again, few knew what Turner was coping with after she left the ildeath threats tha imade. her fear for her life so much that she briefly carried a .38 and bired bodyguards During one of her sets at the Fairmont, Ike arrived with an enfourage. "She got super anxious." Behringer says, "but was a professiona, and acted like every hing was fine " Turner never commented on the noose, and it didn't remain in her show long. But its abquiefing imagery aside, that rage and defiance was the first hint of the way Turner would become a heroine to women who disaffered from domestic violence. and were looking for a way to survive and reset their lives

TART NG WITH DAV ES BICKING around for her fairment show, the happy accident aspect of Turner's return continued with James Brown. In 1982, British Electric Foundation - a patthership between Ware and Ian Craix Marsh - was working on a collection of synthed-up covers o, songs from the 60s and 70s. The duo had erius ed Brown to from help remake of Bail of Confusion: But at the last minute, negotiations will Brown fell brough, they say, and suddenly the producers were left with a backing track and no singer

To Turner's good fortune, the career sa vaging coincidences continued in the offices of Virgin Records in London, Ware was behicaning the fate of his project when Ken-Berry, one of the founders of the label walked by and overheard his predica pent Berry mentioned his friend Tina Turner- maybe she'd be available? Ware had just seen her play in London and was reminded of the power of her voice and persona "I was blown away by her taient and energy," he recalls. "And I thought, 'Well. If anybody can do 't, Tina could ""

When Ware offered Turner and Davies pune tickets to London, they accepted but the first phase of her conteback almost fell through When she learned that the song in question was Ball of Confusion', she "freaked out". Davies ater recailed in L. Ting "She was so afraid of being put back into any kind of category ike 'oldies' or R&B' " (in Ware's memory, Turner had rehearsed the song before, but



may have been unnerved by the fact that the "band" amounted to a bank of synthesizers.) Eventually, Turner went along with the idea, curting he voca, in one day. Whether the song and era evoked memories of the was unclear but she seemed ready to move on "That was quite tricky, to sing hat song. It sounds like there's more than one voice on it." Turner said afterwards to Ware. "And I'm saying, It's 'he Temptations, Tina," he recalls: "She said, Who are they? My theory is that she turned her back on soul music. It's partly like and partly that she felt more connect on with the world of rock'n ro. "

r another setback. Ball of Confusion was only released in Europe But the song's ominous, herky-lerky throb was a universe removed from the soul grooves she had thrown down with lke. In the way, it was a success, announcing to the world that a new Tina Turner had arrived In its wake, Capitor Records, expressed interest n her, and she and John Carter, an A&R nan who'd become a Turner champion, began laying down tracks

A Turner reviva now seemed possible until, again, it almost wasn't, in 1983, Capitol replaced its team with new management, who regan questioning some of the projects in the works. In an infamous comment made to Carter, first reported on PopMatters in 2009. an unnamed executive informed Davies that he was dropping Turner from the labeds roster sturring her as an "old noor douchebag". (After autho of that comment was Included in the 2021 documentary Tina, Capitor issued a statement saying the company was "under different ownership and management, and we're only now learning of those teprehensible and appal ing comments.") Dropping to his knees In a meeting, Carter (as he told PopMa ters) nformed the bass that he wou do I leave the room until he called Day es to say he di made "a misrake". Eventually, the executive pegrudgingly agreed to reverse his decision. while adding that the company would barely lift a finger to promote an album. Her new music would be dead on arriva.

To modernise her sound and image. Turner had dragged her repertoire into the 80s, too. incorporating Don Henley's Dirty Laundry' and Bowle's 'Cat People (Putting Out Fire)' into her set. The Bowle association would lead to another pivotal, if accidental, moment in her ife in January 1983. Bow e was in New York to sign with EMI, and was asked what he was planning to do that evening. To the surprise of the staff, he announced he was going to see his favourite singer Turner Thanks to that endorsement, Davies unexpectedly received



IN FINE VOICE (Above) Tine Turner performing anetage at the Park West, Chicago, Illinois, or 29 January 1983 included in her set was Dayid Bowle's "Cet People (Pulling Out Fire)" one of verious songs chosen to inject a modern flevour into her sound

a request for more than 60 free tickets to the show, all for employees of the label "I became nfinitely more interesting to them after I got David's sea, of approval," Turner said. "I didn't know any of this until rater"

That night, Turner was booked into the Ritz. an art-deco club in the East VL age that, reflecting

Turner's own transfortnation, couldn't have been further removed from Vegas Strip ballrooms When Turner first played the club, in 1981, Mick lagger, Robert De Niro, Diana Ross, and Susan Sarandon were all in attendance. Now, thanks to 'Ball of Confusion', Turner's return engagement in the first month of 1983 had another stellar

TINATURNER



guest list in the house Bowie. Keith Richards. and tennis bad boy John McEnroe

Dressed for part of the show in a black-leather minidress. Turner was up for the challenge: her fniro to 'Proud Mary' was even more suggestive than usual, her rendit ons of the Bowle and Henley songs burned down the house, and a slow, simmering version of the Bealies' 'He piadded a touch of real-life gravitas. At one point. Behringer turned towards the balcony that wrapped around most of the venue to see Turner's all-star fans cheering her on, "You took up and there's David Bowle and all these people, and it was like, "Whoa," she says. "They were all rooting for her 100 per cent. They all

After the show, everyone gathered in the small VIP room off the office of club owner terry Brandt, which held to people tops. Turnet, who always insisted she didn't drink or do drugs, playfully grabbed a champagne bottle and, in one of many flirty momens between

them, pretended to pour it, n.o Bowle's mouth According to photographer Bob Gruen, who was in the room, Bowte played along, although he was worried the champagne would spill on ns ciothes. The fes, vities carried on at Kelth R chards' room at the Plaza hotel, where Richards played plano, and food and a coholwere wheeled in until dawn. "Everyone was happy for Tina that night," says Gruen "She showed she could do it by herself, it didn't have to be 'lke and Tina' " As Turner later wrote, "For me, tha night at the Ritz was the equivalent of going to the ball tin has the part about Prince Charming) because it changed my ife dramatically."

Wich that work on who would become Private Dancer began, starting with Turner returning to London for another collaboration with Ware and Marsh And again, Turner was less than enthralled with the songs they suggested, which included Let's Stay Together "Aren t you guys into any rock n'ro 2" she asked Again, Turner resented as she admitted, "I had a crush on someone back in America." so the song appealed to her. As with 'Ball of Confusion', her simmering take on the A. Green. classic was in taily not available in the States Only after it had become a hit in the UK did. Capito: deign to release it at home

S ... nothing was guaranteed Drummer Bruno thought Turner's future to ancer,ain that he left the band. "I'd been doing it for lines years, and it never changed," he says. "We were playing the hotels, and I was like, 'I'm done | don't know if this is going anywhere. Just goes to show you how much knew." One of his last gigs with her was a McDonald's convention in Hawall (Bruno ater reloined the band after Private Dancer and continued as her drummer for decades

Bu, the success of 'Let's Stay Together' finally sent Private Dancer Into overdrive, and Davies and Carter scrambled to find producers and so igs. One of hem, 'Wha 's Love Got to Do. With it, had already been rejected by other big names. Turner herself nearly passed. "I didn't like it," Turnet said. "I didn't think it was my style," also dubbling it "wimpy". But Dav ea persevered, and the single which brought out he wear ness and lenderness in Turner's voice, would be the one that firmly approunced to the world tha Turnet was reborn. It had taken only four years of expectations, crushed hopes, wrong turns, and slurs, but Turner finally arrived, and for good.

"The whole thing is about earning your way," she later wrote in I, Tina, pondering advice to a child, "and you don't ready get there until you earn t " 🙃



SIMPLY THE BEST

As the world mourns the loss of singing legend Tina Turner, we explore how TINA: The Tina Turner Musical, a production shaped by the star herself, is celebrating and bringing her irreplaceable talent to life on the West End stage

EW RECORDING ARTISTS have ever managed to transcend the stage and captivate the hearts of the public quite like Tina Turner Her life story has resonated deeply with audiences, forging a unique connection that extends beyond mere fandom and reaches people from every stratum of society Turner's story is inseparable

from her career, as she stood all and proud on those famous legs, symbotising endurance and rebirth.

This ethos serves as the foundation for TDVA. The Tina Turner Musical, which continues to thrive after five successful years at London's Aldwyth Theatre The show goes beyond a mere musical retelling of the 1993 Turner blook What's



Love Got to Do with It titself hased on Turner's autobiography, I, Tina). While all these works are of course inspired by Turner's journey, 77/14 fully harnesses the medium by utilising the singer's extensive catalogue to provide fresh context to her nost beloved tracks, using here to punctuate her story in a captivating way.

Debuting in the West End on 17 April 2018. under the direction of Phyllida Lioyd, known for her work on the immensely successful musical Maining Migl. TINA embraced Turner's extraordinary life with active participation from the star herself. As executive producer, Turner played a vital role in shaping the musical's narrative and production, infusing it with the authenticity and accuracy that only she could provide

The collaboration between Turner and the creadye minds behind the masical is a powerful lestament to her dedication in presenting her story with in egrity and reverence just as she lived Turner's involvement ensured that the production captures the very essence of her remarkable journey. It showcases not only her triamphs but also the challenges she bravely faced This profound commitment, combined with the artistic expertise of the creative team, has resulted in a sincere and compelling tribute to Turner's indelible Impact on the music industry

The show taxes the audience on an

Around' portrays the heart-wrenching moment when a young Turner leaves the home of her matriarchal grandmother The track 'I Don't Wanna Fight' takes on even greater significance, representing Turner's violen, split from ike. And as for highs, there are many, particularly when Proud Mary' is belted out, complete with the iconic fringed dress, transporting you to Turner's memorable 1970 performance on The Ed Sullivan Show. These Impactful moments, where Turner's tracks act as musica, milestones, after the perception and deepen the meaning of the sones resonating long after the final curtain falls.

This musical ribuse to Tina Turner is a restament to a regacy that not only prevailed during her decades long career but will continue to Jo so for decades to come. Her story, filled with rlumph over adversity, fortitude in the tace of challenges, and an unwavering

"Turner's tracks act as musical milestones, resonating long after the final curtain falls"

extraordinary journey Prough Turner's life, from her humble beginnings in Nuthush Tennessee, to her ascent to Queen of Rock of Roll. The musical summingly encapsulates the thrilling highs and lows of her career, as well as her personal triumphs and restaence The story antiolds in a chronological narradve, delving into Turner's early struggles, het tumultaous relationship will like Turner and her remarkable compliance as a solo artist, it presents the multiple facets of Turner's persona. from the defiantly loud, scene-stealing choir member as a child to the poushed and formidable performer she becomes as a woman. Along the way, tears flow, laughter erupts, and the audience becomes fully immersed in the story of one of music's most revered legends.

With each electrifying rock performance and soul-stirring ballad complete with five band the audience embarks on an emotional rollercoaster. experiencing the joy, pain, and ultimately, the triumphs of Turner's life. The energy and passion emanating from the stage are infectious, with the cast delivering performances that more than do justice to both the loonic songs themselves and the Iconic woman behind them.

Instead of relying solely on Turner's extensive discography for entertainment in the style of a luxebox musical, the show seamlessly weaves her blugest tracks into the labric of her affe's story. In an early scene, a polgnant duet of 'Don't Turn.

commament to her craft, will continue to histore beople from all walks of life. TINA. The Tina Turner Musical is a celebration of furget's remarkable journey reminding us of the transformative nower of music and the ability of one individual to ivercome obstacles and leave an evertasting mark on the world

While we will lover witness the electrifying powerhouse that was Tina Turner on stage again, the (brill of this West End stable makes it easy to forget that you're not in front of the legend. herself, as her story amolds with one adrena are-fuelled performance after the other. Every shimmy, high kick, and mpossibly soaring note that etunts in the theatre jets us know that Tina Turner is still with us and always will be out for

TICKETS FOR TIME, THE TIME TURNER MATERIAL WAY WAS ARRESTED BY THE PARTY. TINATHEMUSICAL.COM/UK



ONE OF HOLLYWOOD'S MOST BRILLIANT DIRECTORS SPENTTHEPAST FEW YEARS IN... BARBIELAND. GRETAGERWIG GOES VERY, VERY DEEP ON THE PINKEST MOVIE EVER MADE

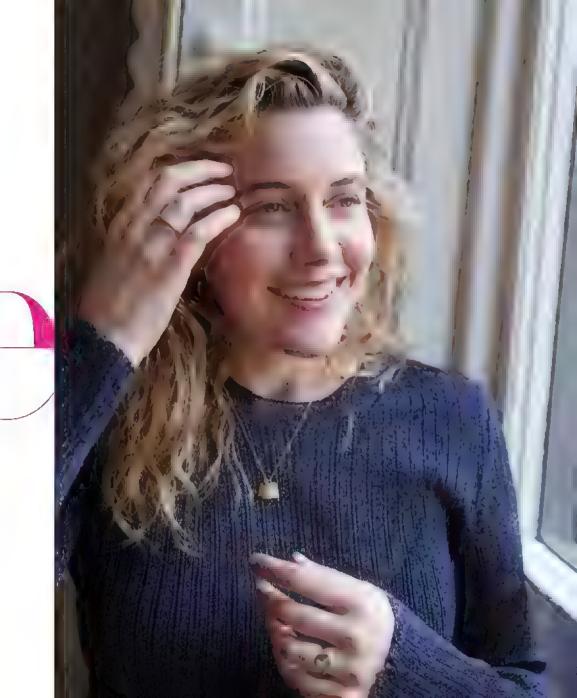
THE BRAIND BEHIND

BY BRIAN HIATT PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLEN FEDORS

WHEN ORKER DERWIG was to preproduction on her Barble movie cout 21, alp), executives from the brand's owner, Mattel, paid her an inevitable visit. She gave them a preview of the movie's cook (very, very plack) and feet defy magical-realism rumped up amous and fold). Then she all them with a monologue so if like the influence of spiritualist painters, how Barble is like an unclent religious myth, references to The Red Shoes and 'Stairway to Heaven' and Heaven Can Wall.

"I think at that point, when I was in hour three of talking," Gerwig recalls with a small laugh, "they al, realised no one has thought more about this. They saw I wake up every morning and pante about proportions and colour saturation. And they were like, "We don't have to panic. She's already panicked about his." And, "hink that gave them a sense of comfort."





On a sunny late-May morning, Gerwig is setting at a conference table in the rented Manhattan office suite where she's finishing post-production, in one of the denim boiler suits she started wearing every day during the making of the movie (loday's is black), her hair in a loose bun. It's 10 30, and she has a three-month-old baby at home (plus a four year-old and a 13-year-old stepson), so she's just now getting to breakfast, which she takes down as she embarks on two more hours of erudile 80-bit talk.

We'l before Barble, Gerwig had one of the most fascinating careers in Zist century Hollywood. First she brought a new kind of daffy comedic naturalism to screen acting, from early mumblecore trumphs ethannah Takes the Stairs to a string of brilliant collaborations with her partner Noah Baumbach, including Greenberg Frances Ha and Mistress America. She cowrote the last two movies before shifting gears to autourdom in 2017, withing and directing the exquisite coming of age comedy Lady Bird, and 2019's revisionist take on Little Women.

Barble, which stars Margot Robbie and Ryan Gos ing (and was co-written with Baumbach), is her beggest and most mainstream project. But she ha sis it doesn't feel that way. "I've never been part of anything like his," she says. "But it is funny way, it feels like the fundamentas are the same. Even though it is Barbie and it is an internationally known brand, the movie feels very personal. It feels just as littlmate as Lady Bird or Latter Women."

I know you tend to resist autobiographical interpretations, but when Barble says, "I don't wante be an idea anymore," comething about that really reminded me of your transition from a much-discussed actress to a writer-director.

You know what? It's so funny That did not occur to me at all. But now that you say it, of course! When you're directing something, you have to be a bit stupid about yourself, or a little bit unconscious. And, yes, you're totally right. And also, I had no idea. But that's true it's completely true.

There are things like I grew up in Sacramento, and Lady Bird takes place in Sacramento But so many of the things that are personal that come through your movies are never the things that are the most obvious to you. The things where you really feel unconsciously seen are things like that, where you realise, "Oh, man, I ddn't hide where you realise," Oh, man, I ddn't hide.

anywhere." And that's always part of the Joy of making art for people, that sometimes they understand it more than you do, which is unsettling.

Sorry!

No, but it's good.

How core to this whole project was the idea that Barbia would want to take a journey where she could become human? I hope two things made that journey feel surprising our inevitable. I started from this idea of Barbieand, this place with no death, no ageing, no decay, no pain, no shame. We know the story. We've heard this story. This is an old story. It's in a jot of religious literal are What happens to that person? They have to leave. And they have to confront all the things that were shielded from them in this place. So that feel files one thing

And another thing feit like well, it's Barble, who's the queen of plastic! What better thing could we do than give her a real ite? That would have to be the thing. Because it's the antithesis of something frozen, it's ever-thanging and decaying and becoming beautiful in its falling apart. And that's the apposite of how we trink of Barble.

There's a lovely scene where Barble sees an older woman — a sight she'd never encountered in Barbleland — and tells her she's beautiful

I ove that scene so much. And the order woman on the bench is the contume designer Ann Roth. She's a legend.

It's a cuilde-sec of a moment, in a way - it doesn't lead anywhere. And in early cuts looking at the movie, it was suggested, "Well, you could cut it like a surge," And I said, "If I cut the scene. I don't know what this move is about."

Yeah, I kind of thought that was the moment Sarble decides she wants to be human.

That's how I saw if 'To me, this is the heart of the groyle. The way Margot plays Just moment is so gentle and so unforced. There's the more outrageous elements in the movie that people say, "Oh, my God, I can't believe Mattel let you do this." or, "I can't believe Warner Bros. let you do this." But to me, the part that I can't believe that is still to the movie is this larde calde-sac that doesn't lead anywhere. except for it's the heart of the movie.

Margot said when she first saw the acreenplay, she loved it, and was positive that the powers that he would never let you make it. How do you think you got it all through?

The movie in its conception and even from the script stage was always a wild ride Bail bink that in the execution of it and he directing of it, it allowed me to go even farther, and to make it even more like a candy coloured explosion of things that people didn't necessarily think would be the Barble movie. But, yeah, I can't account for it. Bu. I'm thrilied to bits that they set me do it this way.

It's definitely a blast of colour, which is refreshing after years and years of increasingly colour-desaturated summer blockbusters.

I never wanted my adult taste to override wha I oved as a kid. When I was eight years old, I loved the biggest brightest, loudest, parkliest thing that I could find. And I need to honour that even though I wan, the movie to be beautiful and develous. I don't want it to be overwhelmed with adult good taste, because that Just feels dis ngendous to wha the task in. So we were picking these bright, saturated condust. The result was that the set was like a dopounting generator. People would walk in and smile.

It's easy to underestimate what it took for Margot to manifest what we saw onscreen, especially when she's just being the Barble-ast Barble she could possibly be. How did that performance evolve?

Margo and I talked a lot about finding this place where it's not that she isn't smart, but

"I MIGHT DIRECT MOVIES FOR A LONG TIME AND NEVER SEE ANYTHING THAT UNHINGED"





hat she doesn r, at the beginning, have an interior life Finding that sort of transparent as an actor was the osselfite of where Barbie started. And then the discomfort of itering disconnected from the environment, from technic something coming up inside of you that shot the same as everyone esse

She's such a technical actor But as Burba, becomes human, she allows the audience to see her experienting something pure a thout performing. She's allowing herself to be vulnerable. And it'n crazy bocause she's playing a dol, and yet it's such an exquisitely human performance. It's not sometifing where you can stick the landing it was sometifing where she had to just allow it to happen. She's a person who can stick andlings—and I trink it was finding another sear inside of her.

Tell me about what it took to get Ryan Goslingas Kan, and to push him to be the most ridiculous version of Ryan Gosling imaginable.

Well, It was only ever Ryan Gosting, and it was a long journey. Margot and I just wouldn't take no for an answer

From the moment that Margot came to me and I knew we were making this for Margot, I equally knew we were making this for Ryam. And I did not know Ryam at all. I'd never met tim. I just was sure, and as soon as I though, of It, It made me so happy Who else could do this? It's some combination of Marlon Brando meets Gene Wilder meets John Barrymore meets John Fravolta.

He's never been quite this funny onscreen. I've always thought of him as a secretly comedic actor. His comedy goes back to taking it incredibly seriously as an actor.

where he never is doing it just for the mugh. And the way we talked abou. Ken was as indenth character work as I've ever done with anyone about anything. When they were shooting their last acene together, in the bedroom where they're kind of coming to a piace of understanding, and when he turns around and says, "There is no just Ken, it's Barble and Ken," and he's exhausted and his lace is statued with tears - Pro Doc. if what actors do is perform empathetic acts for our benefit, I don't know that anyone has ever invested more in making people understand the plight of this man, it was extraordinary I felt with both of them that I might direct movies for a long time and never see anything that uniquely and g ortously unhinged.

How did you craft the moment where Barble finally learns that some women in the real world hate her and find her oppressive?

I fett like we had to give the counterargumento Barbte, and not give it short shrift, but give it real intellectual and emotional power And Mattell was litered bly open to fr. I said, "We have to explore it, because it's a lie any other way. And we can't make it a lie." I think they heard it.

The feminism in this film comes out to naturally, lust by placing Barbie and Ker in the real world. It starts the moment they arrive in Venice Beach Ken feels that people are suddenly looking at him with respect, and Barbie doesn't have the words for it, but she feels she's being objectified. Did that flow out as naturally as it seems?

anything else. How Barble operates in

Gerwig on set with Gosling. 5 mu Liu and Robbio

VV

Barbieland is she's entirely continuous with her environment. Even the houses have no walls, because you never need to hide because there's nothing to be ashamed of or embarrassed of And suddenly finding yourself in the real world and wishing you could hide, that's the essence of being harrian. But when we were achially shooting on Venice Beach, with Margot and Ryan Inneon roberblading patfits. It was fascinating because it was actually happening in front of us. People would go by Ryan, bigb-five 18th, and say, "Awesome, Ryan, you look great!" And they wouldn't actually say anything to Margot They d last look at her It was last surreal. In that moment, she did feel seif conscious. And as the carector, I wanted to protect her. But I also knew that the scene we were shooting had to be the scene where she felt exposed. And she was exposed, both as a celebrity and as a lady. To be fair, Ryan was like. "I wish I wasn't wearing this yest," [Laughs] But it was a different kind of discom ort

When I hear you use the word "humanist", I feel like I need to gently push back on behalf of the fans who are going to love this movie and perceive its message as unabashedly feminist.

Of course, I am a food dat. But this movie is also dealing with the literathical power structure that moves in any direction isn't so great. You go to Martel and it is really like, "Oh, Barbie has been president since 1991. Barbie had gone to the moon before women could get credit cards." We kind of extrapolated out from that tha, Barbie hand, a this reversed world where Barbies rule and kens are an underclass! The reverse structure of whatever Barbieland is, is almost like Planet of the Apex. You can see how a likit this is for the Kens because it's totally unsustainable.

Was the idea of Kate McKinnon's character — the Welrd Barble who's been played with too much — from your childhood experience?

We grew up in a neighbourhood where there were a not of girls older than me. So I had a lot of hand ine-down Barbles that had already gotten a haircut by the time I got them. It was like, "Well, we have to do that" It feit a most like a spiritual conduit to the world of play, drough hat Barble. Remember that book The Giver by Lois Lowry, where the giver has all the colours and the feelings

and stuff? That's sort of what I thought about Kate's character. She would be like the giver in a way like she had the knowledge that everyone else didn't have.

There are clips online of you and Kate onstage together in a production at Columbia University.

We fived rogether, we were in an improve group together I always thought Kate was the finniest, most talented person I knew. But then you have this moment where you hitek, "Well, maybe that was just cokege." But I was right.

When I was casting and I called her, we aughed the whole time because I think we both had the same experience at that moment For whatever reason, with the direction that our lives led us, I'm actually directing this movie, and she actually is a comedic genius who was recognised as such. And now we're adults, and I'm saying, "Do you want to come do this?" It was like, we'd goften into a time machine when we were 18 and came out at 39. The reality is, we're still he 18-year-old sids who are making musicass. We actually didn't get more sophisticated han we were if 18.

Now that you've entered this world of big frenchises, how will you belence your directing career going forward, between huge commercial films and smaller ones?

I think probably every director has a familiary baseball league in their head of what movies they want to make And-here's some movies. Id like to make that require a big carrors. At the same time, I've seen so many directors move between bigger movies and smaller movies: Chioé Zhao doing Nomadiand and making Eternals. Or Steven Soderbergh, or even my weekend buddy Chris Nolan. He made the Dark Knight trillogy—and they're wonderful—and then made The Prestige, which is not a tiny movie, but it is also not the same thing. I want to play in lots of different worlds. That's the goal

There's footage out there of you directing the garden scene in Lady Bird, and you eem so joyous, it feels like you love being a director

I tove it so much. I love every part of making a movie, soup to nuts. And Margot is the same way For us, it's Disneyland every day I fromestly can't beceve I get to do this.

You're a member of the Directors Guild, the Writers Guild, and the Actors Guild. The Writers Guild is already on strike, and the other guilds don't seem too happy, either. There are whispers of a tri-Guild walkout.

I'm really proud of being a union member: I'm in support 100 per cent of however we come at this.



I'm living through the moment like everybody else is, especially in terms of the Al thing, which is terrifying and exciting I don't know what to say about it. I guess it's clearly a tool that hopefully can be used to help. I think it's incredibly important to protect creative people - writers and directors and actors because I don't think what they can do can be replicated. We have to set some very firm ground rules moving forward. Because otherwise, we're looking at a world that becomes a photocopy of a photocopy.

This feels like it would have been an insene question before Barble, but would

you want to do a superhero movie, or an action movie?

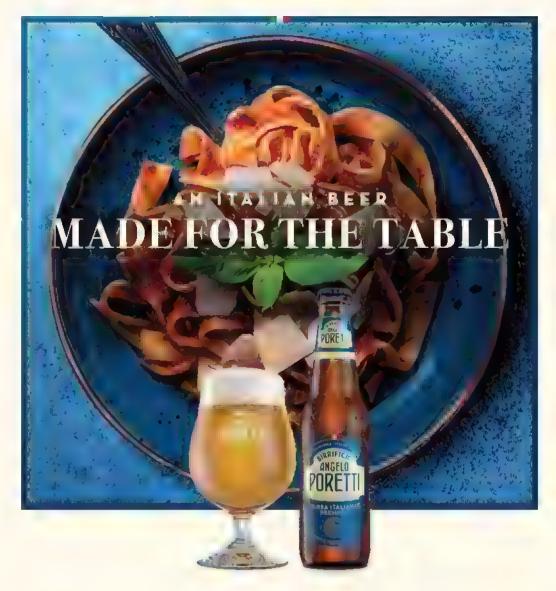
Yes, of course. It would have to be something I had a feeling for and a reationship to. A well-shot, well-executed action movie is just incredible. It's a dance, I've never done anything like that. But even in a small way, working with the stunt coordinator who did light choreography on Barble, he was just faschating. It was so fun to take to him.

I think Berbie, in a way, is already a superhero movie.

Laughs. Yeah, in a way it's iconic in the same way. And it's sort of mythic in the same way.

"ILOVE EVERY PART OF MAKING A MOVIE, SOUPTO NUTS, AND MARGOT ISTHES AMEWAY"





VALGANNA ITALIA 1877



By Mankaprr Contch

o ociantis iy Justin French

> As she releases her most sumptions album yet, the triple-threat stargoes deep on everything from anxiety to Al to how to "burry up and live"

Janelle Monáe slides down the frontzipon heronesie

slings the suit down her back, and wiggles her hare ass lowerds about 20 of her dear friends.

it's game night at Wondaland West, the homey Los Angeles cumpus where kinelle works and communes, comple e with a studio, slving quarters, and an immaculate teal poor nestied within a grove of tropical flora, Janelle's but makes its appearance via Consequences, a game she requested we play. Her friends Stephanie and Tree invented it when they were visiting Janene in Greece as she filmed Glass Onion, the 2022 marder-mystery comedy in which she plays essentially four starring roles, (it went on to be one of the most popular Netflix movies ever.)

To play Consequences, we flip over a grid of cards they princed out, two at a time, in search of matching pairs, the cards also direct players to endure a series of dares, from simulating sex with someone in the room to pitching an item there

tixe a salesperson. (Several involve downing shots) We take turns scanning for matches and choosing challenges while sitting in a square n Wondaland's den, where a tan, L-shaped sectional is offset by boxy, barnt-orange armchairs, funky plush dining ones, a sleek, cream tounge chair and a straddleable sheen.

Josh Dean, a musician and friend of lanelle, has to sight essly let someone else put a body part in his mouth and guess what it is, so Laura, who I'm told works on game shows, puts her knee on his aps. I elect to mean for the group rather than give

them my iMessages to search through.

"Fuck!" yells fancile, whose cards direct her to either take a body part in her mouth or show us the goods. The decision comes quickly: "I'm 'bout to moon the group!" Loud cheers follow. "We need some music?" someone shouts.

'Phenomenal', a track from The Age of Pleasure, Janetie's new a burn and first in five years, reverberates through the room "I'm looking at a thousand versions of myself," she announces over a creeping bass line. "And we're a li Fitte. As fuck."

'Phenomenal' Janelle is confident. Came-night. Janeile is wavering. "Watt, I have to see if I'm ashy!" she says before running into a bathroom beyond the nurble wal. She returns, shimmles out of her pink and white striped jumpsuit, adorned with Disney a original Cheshire Cat's stuffed face on the hood and long tail on the back, and shakes her booty shyly. As her friends

> roar in support and delight, her lit ers seem to melt away. The quick wiggle turns into a bit of twerking, and the crowd goes wild.

"Y'all saw that R'l asby booty!" she shouts

ANRILE'S BARE BLIT has made a handful of appearances during her 20year career, like at the 2016 BET Awards, when she

tore away snow white fabric hanging over her backside to reveal assiess chaps in tribute to ber late mentor, Prince. But naked skin has been a big theme recently, a hallmark of Janelie's new era of liberation, a way to celebrate her autonomy and massive success. You could find her bare torso in recent Instagram Reels. She elegantly wrapped her breasts in beads and mesh this past awards season, and barely covered them with her fingertips for this feature. "I'm much happier when my tittles are out and I can run around free," says lamelle, who says her pronouns are she/her, they/them, and "free-ass motherfucker"

to 2023, janelle Monáe Robinson is a singular force: a musician, writer, and actor who has parlayed those triple-threat achievements into culture-shifting, Black fem nist, pro-queer stances and action. She grew up in a workingclass, devoutly Baptist family in Kansas City, Kansas, before beginning to make music in Atlanta with people who've become her best friends, like Nate Wonder and Chack Lightning. Her vision was so clear that Diddy, an admitted control freak, vowed not to interfere with her deas when he stened her to his label.

On her early albums, Janelle built a fictional Afrofuturist dreamscape that - in the tradition of the genre's great storytellers, like author Octavia Butler - allowed her to contempla e the traumas and possibilities of her own life on Earth, While those works were earning her eight Grammy nominations, she starred in films like Moonight and Hidden Flaires - both of which were nominated for flest Picture at the Oscars in 2017, with Moonight unting home the gold, "She's extremely gifted," says friend and Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o, "It's built into her spirit. Her openness creates intimacy onscreen. It's really cool to see her move from one thing to another and do it with such mastery." Along the way, Janeue publicly shared her pansexuality for the first time, in Rolling Stone in 2018, and came out as nonbinary last year, becoming the kind of queer icon many of as wish we'd and more of growing up.

Especially as of late and this is important la telle is also furi as hell, determined to sayour the fruits of her labour. She seems positively buoyant these days: the life of the party at enviable bacchinais (many of them hosted at Wondai and West), the centrepiece of this year's NBA All-Star Weekend (scoring several headturning looks, despite scoring no points in the Celebrity Game), and the most enthusiastic fan in the sprawl of Coachelia VIPs. She explains how things have changed on her new single Float' "I had to protect all my energy/I'm feelth' much iteluer now "

At 37, Jane le has reorientated her world around pleasure, trying to consciously enjoy herself, to quiet ber mind, to party but also be present. "I think being an artist gets lonely " lanelle tells me. "Most people don't understand what's going on in my brain Community has been so helpful to me, it's beautiful that a have a title called The Age of Pleasure because it actually re-centres me. It's not about an album anymore.



MINOR BY MODULE AND MINOR BY ONDE

THE SPEED YEST TROUBLES AND ACCESSORIES BY CHARAL RWELLERY BY /ACQUE ACCES



I've changed my whole fucking lifestyle "

Still prioritising pleasure has its challenges, especially when a world of anodety lucks somewhere anderneath.

AS GAME NIGHT which down, an Imprompts, group performance to SWV's 1992 hit "Weals' begins with Janelle belding out the song atop an ottoman, and ends with her and Wonder tucked in a corner of the sectiona, sofa seriously working out new harmonies for the song. "Weak", of course, is 90s R&B at its best, but it's particularly special to Janelle. "I remember being in the basement straining with my seven best friends," Janelle notes from atop the furniture. "I dudn't know if I could stag, but when I mother fucking thastered that song, knew I could mother fucking stag."

Game night at Wonda, and is soundtracked by a I sorts of music. Afropop hits, 'Losing You, by Janelle's old friend Solarige (Janelle helped match-make Solarige's last marriage, 'Persuasive', by Janelle's new friend Doechii Janelle catches a groove and freestyles some ters to an Afrobeats edit of Work' by Rihanna, a remix so wibrant and unfamiliar it catches me off guard. Later, Wonder Jells me he made the remix that day, especially for the gathering, right before it started "I've gotten used to right before we have a night, making new songs to play See what people think," he says. That instinct we're having a party, so we've got to make some music is exactly how. The Age of Pleasure came to be

Janelle, Wonder, and Lightning's Wondaland

JAESS BHOLL AND ACCENDURES AY BONDAPARELLE

> Records began in Ananta as an indie label and artist collective before it grew into a partnership with Epic Records. But in 2020, as the pandemic regain to unravel, janelle recalls, "We were like, Do we want to be in Ahapta writing indoors, or do we want to be around nature and stuff?" Atlanta had practically raised Janelle; Los Angeles was just a place of business. She decided to take Wonda, and to California, but she wasn't sold on LA until a brand-new community coalesced. around her in the uncertainty of a globa, crisis.

In the years BC (Before Covid), Jane...e attended Everyday People, one of the hottest globe-trekking parties of the Black daspora. At hese parties, the music spans innovative mixes of Afropop, Caribhean gems, house and hip-hop, the driples flow and everyone is getting down on a massive floor. When Everyday People was locked. out of venues during the pandemic, Janene offered it space at Wonda, and West. Its courtyard s magnificent, with its tranqui, poor in the centre and troves of nooks, crannies, ourdoor baths and citrus trees (laneue insisted on having an orange picked for me the afternoon after game night). With Covid raging, their teams were careful to test partygoers and remain outside

They would park a Di by the pool sometimes Everyday People co-founder mOma. sometimes Janelie's producer Nana Kwabena

and the yard would fill with begutifu. Black creative types, shaking ass. As the world opened ap post 2020. Wondaland and Everyday People continued throwing bangers. The 2020 parties aspired Jane le's new music. The latter ones were lates for it

ranetie clearly the ligh to make new music while fi ming Glass Onlon over the summer of 2021 Having finally escaped lockdown to stretch her comedic mascle across Greece and Serbia, she was inspired. She knew she wanted to tap into the frequency of her pandemic parties. So she had her producers Wonder and Kwabena send her instrumentals to mall over while she was away. "I fust kept dreaming " says fanelle. "I was lke, 'When I get back, I cannot wait to have a party again."

Nyong'o attended one in 2021, "It was lit," she

says matter-of-factly. "It was just a different world once you walked through the doors. Everybody's outfits were extremely well thought our and expressive and the music was delicious. It felt like we were all craving this kind of event, this kand of... I want to say just reckless abandon." Nyong'o danced anti. her feet were some

After Janeue settled back in the States after filming, the parties

became more strategic a place to test out new material. "I was like, 'OK, if we have a party in spring of 2022, I want to have records ready," janelle explains, " I want to honour this experience, and be really specific about it? The best way to figure it out? 'Let's play that shift at the party.

Once there, they never called atten, on to Janelle's new music, slipping it into Kwabena's DI sets as seam essly as they could "We were super specific around tempo," says Janeile. "We were like, 'Nana, you re at that 82 BPM, or that at 92 BPM," the songs have to start there." Were

there any ulls when she worked her stuff to? "Not really."

The Age of Pleasure is a Blackity Blackass album. It traverses the realms of music that are indisputably ours. This time, instead of sci-fi metropolises, Janelle leans into the worlds we live in. "It was inspired by all of my friends, my community of folks who are from south Africa Ghana, Nigeria, the Caribbean, Atlanta, LA, Chicago," Janelie says. "Seeing all of us together in our Blackness, in the love that we had in our eyes for each other People from the confinent fack around with trap from Atlanta. You know what I'm saving? I love how the diaspora we talk to each other:

'Float' features the grand brass of Nigeria a Seun Kutl and Egypt 80, a legacy of Kutl's father, Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kati Janeue says that when Sean heard The Age of Pleasure in full, he told her, "I hear my dad," The album also Ficludes Sister Nancy, the Jamaican dancella I iege id behind the immortal 1982 lift. Barn Barn, as well as classic Black American accress Nia Long and Ghanalan American sinsor Amagrae. New Afrobeats act CKay visited Wondaland to guest on the sunky, walst-whining Know Better . while Doechil, the rapper set to take the mantle at kendrick Lamar's former label, came by to end her voice to Phenomena. It evokes both a sweaty night of Sop h African amantano and a flercely queer New York ballroom scene

"I want things to feel so true to my life." Janetle explains, "I used to consider myself a futurist. I know who, that means, to obsess about the next thing. A present tourist a what I'm cading myself right now. I'm actively focusing on being present "

HEAD OF GAME NIGHT, lanelle. and I have our first one-onyee in Wondaland Wes 's studio. It has its own living space beyond a wail, cosy but striking. Lush plants are set off agains, elegant wood accents, rustic floors, and floor-to-ceiling shelves full of viny. Prince's Controversy.

David Bow e's Scary Monsters, and Are ha Franklin's Amazing Grace among them, I spot at least, hree guitars, a polished black apright plano next to a tastefu, canvas of a topless. buxom woman sketched in black pencil, and another sheep for sitting.

lanelle sits at the recording desk in her onesie. her full of natural short black hair priced back. in a messy bun lit's not hairstyle-messy, it s I-woke-up-like-this messy. About an hour into our conversation there, she excuses herself to dart out of the room and returns with a joint. "I just always wanted to be in an interview but

be lit up." she says, playful and serious at once. She fidgets with the jay and begins to smoke, but something is missing

"Do you need an ashrray?" I ask her "I do, See, you can tell I'm a roolde."

fanelie likes weed and she likes shrooms, the atter of which fits her as a pretty naturally trippy person, and also doesn't run the risk of ruining ber voice "I grew up fearful of marijuana because I had parents who were addicts," Janelle also explains, referring particularly to her dad's formerly debilitating crack-cocaine use, "They would always say, 'Weed is the gateway drug to being a crackhead, and I grew up with that in my mind and heart "

When Covid hit, she got curious about weed as a way to manage her anxiety. She's discussed having full-on "anxiety attacks" while making 2018's Dirty Computer: "I was like, 'We're in the middle of a pandemic," she says. "I'm not on the road lief me rest out weed."

Janelie recently diagnosed herself with OCD, which she connects to a lifelong pattern of perfection.sm. She told the podcast Translash. a show for and by transgender and gendernonconforming people, that her perfectionsm stems from struggling with abandonment and rejection from her father during his addiction (though the two are now close). "I started to have this unbealthy relationship with being perfect, so that nobody would leave me," she lold the show.

She's doing a lot of work to heal those wounds, "I know how to coach myse, I if it comes up again," she says to me before ruminaling or what adgers. "But a lot hat I third made me. And in OCD... if something isn't exactly how I see it. in my mind, it's trash." She started therapy as soon as she started making good money, and now works with an "emotional-support coach," a good friend who's deived into mental-weigness work, laneue tries to meet with her once a week.

There was a particularly taxing period last year when her extensive Glass Onton press run overlapped with work on The Age of Pleasure, spreading her thin. "In those momena. I have to have someone helping the work through my schedule, helping me not feel gullty about saying to to something, because all this affects your mental health," she exputins, janeue gets

adigment when she thinks of how fare mentalbea, in resources are for others. "Not a lot of people have the luxury of saying or doing what It is I'm doing. I think that therapy, life coaching included, should be free for every American," she says. "There's so many people walking around wounded emotionally. We would be better as a country, as a planet, if everybody had the access."

Some of the tools she's garnered from therapy help her manage the ADHD she was diagnosed with as an adult. There's darker stuff, too, that she's not ready to divulge yet, but has hinted at

When she accepted the Trewsr Project's Suicide Prevention Advocate of the Year Award last September, she called herself "someone who has dealt with depression" "I think I'll have a moment where I will talk a little bit more freely about it," she says. "But I absolutely have had very tough times internally, even career-wise, that i've privately deal, with and had to come out of "

Trying to live in pleasure as a "present tourist" has been a light "It's not easy," she says, "You have to train your though is."

Leet It. We talk about my own bouts of depression and subsequent periods of happiness. "I would be nervous." I told her. "Why do I feel good? And is something going to go wrong again?"

"Oh, my God, I swear you're in my head," she says She gets tt.

With an album on the way, she's fending off panic, for now. "The old me would be freaking out," she says. She's juggling visual treatments and rehearsing the new album she wants to perform it at pop-ups she's considering calling Pleasure Parties. Plus, with its new experiences with furn and resevision, her production company, Wondaland Pictures, is exploring new ways to advance the sel-fl saga of Cindi Mayweather, the android character from several of lanelie's a hums who falls in love with a human and is hunted (or it. Clind is defiance becomes messiante). inspiring hope and rebellion across the futuristic urban landscape sanelle created on the records. The Smithsonian's National Maseum of African American History and Quature even recently came to her to borrow Cindi Mayweather relics for their new Afrofic arism exhibit

"I want my Star Wars," she says, "As a writer, as a storyteller, as an actor, to be able to do the soundtrack that's rooted from works that I whote "

"I've old her I need a Janeile Monáe written and directed scl-B movie in my life, and I need it soon," says Rlan Johnson, who directed

Glass Onton. While making the film, Janelle's commitment to storyte ling even shone off set like when Johnson would brow murder-mystery parties for the cast. "Janelle would show up," he says, "dressed in a top hat and monocle and a detective's cape. She invented a find character with a backstory and had an accent. She didn't drop the character for a long, long time into the evening. It would definitely hit a point in the night where ishe d be called 'Janeue' and she'd be like, 'You mean Lord Wimplebody the Third? Yes? How may a help you?""

Johnson is eager to co laborate with her again. "The next thing I'm doing is probably the next Benoit Blanc mystery," he says, referring to Danie. Craig's character in the Knives Out series. "I was about to say, "I guess she can't be 'u that," but I don't know, maybe she'u show up as Lord Pedigrew the Third."

As someone who straddles the music industry and Hollywood, Janelle has a unique perspective on the major obstacles in both. "I think both industries have a lot of fucking work to do," she says, sharply "There are a lot of systemic things hat need to change."

Janelle was a vocal supporter of the Time's Up movement that spawned from revelations of assoult, discrimination and barassment across H - vwood, onslage at the Grait mys in 2018. she helped shepherd Time's Up into the music industry. In March, her nonprofit supporting the persona, and academic development of girls and nonbinary youth, Few the Pullare, announced ! would be expanding with a grant from Warner Music Group.

Even as the purview of Janelle's work has grown from music to movies to phianti rapy and beyond, she most focused on being creative - and bet is nerself. "The old version of how I would do nterviews is I would've been in some black and white, and maybe I would've put a little makeua. on. But I was like. 'You know what? I actually don't have..." she tralls off to get giggly brant "Not hat I don, care about this interview But I don't have the mental capacity to be anything other than who I am." She does, however, have small because of translucent glitter pided at the corners of her eyes, I ask her why. "I was tike, I want to feel galactic today; " she says. "A

galactic gamet, because this is game night"

HEN COME back to the studio entrance the next afternoon. I mistake Janelle for a stuffed animal. Her back is to the s.id.ng door, and her head is covered with the hood of a fuzzy onesie with pointed ears. From the front she looks like a red panda a sma... raccon-

tike marupai from the eastern Himalayas, firell her as much. "You know what this Is?" she says. "It's rare. Extinct. This is the last one of them. A Wondahe, r*

The Wondabear is chopply strumming an acoustic guitar, Janelle has worked to build about an hour and a half of guitar practice into her daily routine, which goes something like this first thing in the morning, she avoids her phone, which she keeps by her bedside, though she "would prefer to keep it in the tollet" Then, she dives into what she calls her "fertiliser hours"

"I'm working out between 9.30 am and 10.30, somewhere between that, because I m going to bed at £00 or 2.00 if I'm really locked in," she



KODYBUJE AND LAMRINGS IN RPKA

says. She often listens to Spotify's playlist of rap by women, Seeing Myself, while she does full-body, high-intensity interval fraining. Next, she practises guitar, then eats around noon, then practises paino for 45 minutes. After that, she pencils in some time or make something beautifut. "I don't care if it's me doodling. Making, himso prines me suppose."

Once she's fertilised, she allots three hours to conference calls and questions from her array of collaborators. She often decompresses with a show Severance is a recent fave, clausite a woman of exquisite aste, also loves Bob's Burgers.)

When I find her on an ecoustic gultar, Janelle is practising a song called "Lipstick Lover" "I like lipstick on my neck," she sings coolly on It "Leave a sticky-icky in a place I won't forget." The song is about queer intimacy and tinged with reggae, tiotable since reggae and its slster genre, dancehal, have a storled history of some homophobic hits like immederously homophobic, janelle wasn't considering that context when she made it, though, it didn't coss

her mind. Her JWH memories did

"I have a whole spreadsheet with 50 to almost 100 experiences that I had at this party," she says of her courtyard ragers. "I've been a Lipstick

Lover" she tells me "I weat red lipsticks at the parties. I've had noments where if me and a girl or an energy..." she says, getting away from gender, "want to engage you're going to see lipstick" lanelle would leave her mark, making t clear shey had been dasting.

Sometimes I happens the other way around. "I remember how it felt when I got kissed on my nack with red distilct." I remember how I went to bed feeling. It was a deep rouge If want matter. I remember the way the person.

tooked And I was like, "That's a fucking song."

Janelle is notoriously mum about the specifics
of her tove life: "I have a policy and agreement
with myself—that is a part of my life that I want

to keep private. I can talk about my Identity, I can talk about my sexuality. I can talk about all things Janelie Monáe without having to go into detai. You know what I mean? It's not necessary."

The Age of Preasure is righteously sexual, sometimes copyl, sometimes sumptruously 'Only have Eyes 42' plays like an ode to polyumory, or at least, a romentic three-way. "Pil say this," she affers when I bring it up. "My hope is that people can feel what I was experiencing versus me telling them details about it I was just like, I want people to feel like they were there with me. Whatever that feels like for them, I want hem to have that moment."

A couple of years back, Nyong'o was ticked by rumours that she and Janelie were an Item. "She has magnetism that they were obviously picking up on. She is that enigmatic," Nyong'o tells ms. "People are curious about enigmacic people. It was not surprised. And I don't mind being associated with her in any capacity,"

When Nyong's was first ascending the heights of Holywood after winding the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress in 12 Years a Slave, she met ja ieue at her first Met Gals. "This world is at Ill extremely new to me and unbelievable," she remembers. "Janoilel came up to me and just gave me the reasest hug. I think we may have swayed to the music. She was just like. "I'm so proud of you, and just think you, for being you."

Celebrity Interactions can fee shallow and optement. It is one was not "At some point, I Janelle, asked me for my phone, put her number in and said, "Let's stay in touch she was like, "I really mean it. If you need anything, I'm here for you." Ever since, Janelle's been someone Nyong'o can reay on, whether for advice in a moment of crisis or a party invite.

Even so, Nyong o doesn't feel the she knows janetee inside and out. "Just because you're a close friend of hers doesn't mean you get to know everything about her," she says. "I think tha "s what makes her interesting as an artist."

N THE FIVE years since Janelle came out as pansexua, there's been a groundswell of representation of and support for LGBTQ and gender-diverse people Bad Bunny has openly embodied sexual fluidity in his art and interviews. Reyonce's latest album. Rendszarice, is proudly indebted to and inclusive of queer tastemakers. Insider com found that even the rate of confirmed

LGETQ characters in animated children's shows increased by 222 per cent from 2017 to 2019.

According to Galup, the share of American adults who identify outside of intermexicality doubled from 3.5 pet cent to 7.1 per cent between 2012 and 2022, with 21 per cent of Gen



Z adults landing on the LGBTQ spectrum. And while tallies of trans and nonbinary populations are recent and evolving last year, an expansive one from Pew Research Center found has 1.6 per cent of US adults and 5.1 per cent of young adults don't ascribe to the gender assigned to them at birth. More and more people also know someone who is trans, and most Americans have at least heard a little about gender outside of the binary of woman and man.

There is also been a flerce backlash to this backling sexual revolution. From Florida's Tourist says Gay" age to dozens of bids targeting crag shows across the country, there have been more than 400 unit-LGBTQ bids introduced in the US so far this year.

I ask jamelle if she's keeping up with the growing scroll of queerphobic legislation, "I am," she says. "It's infariating, it's cruel." Last spring, janelle reseased an anthology of Afroiuturing short stories to condocration with several wher authors. The book, The Memory Librarian and Other Stories of Dirty Computer, would likely be bunned in states like Florida for centring queer and trans characters — an example, the says, of "us not being able to talk about ourselves, as though we're not real people".

She's dedicated much of her career to championing the people this kind of bigotry affects, hersel among them. But when I ask if there's a weight to that expectation, to being embraced as an emblem of queer advocacy or queerness itself, she emphasizes her freedom to be a person and not just a symbo. "You cannot project onto artists," she says to no one in particular "You have to understand that experiences will be had and people will change and evolve and not be the person you look up to. As much as you love and care about me, I'm on my own journey that has nothing to do with art.

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There was a time, she adds, "where I feit like I should put pressure on myse," to live up to expectations of what I see like a majority of people would want up to do. But that time isn't now."

At this year's Pre-Grammy Gala, Janelle wore a black Vera Wang gown with a nockline that planged to her waist and a skirt with a sheer train that descended from her bips. A fan on Twitter wrote, "junelle monae finally showing off how fine she Is Instead of dressing like the monopoly man." This allusion to the signature black-and-white tuxedos she wore early in her career tickled her. Those suits were a kind of antiform, she says, one she wore to honour her parentis. Janelle's dad was a garbageman, her nom a janitor who shuttled Janelle to theatre classes, and sometimes chose to make sure she had her stage costumes instead of paying the electricky bill.

Janelle likes to think of ways of being in terms of elements, "I'm working in my soft, llowing-water energy right now," she says. Though she values how the suits of old represented an important distription of gender and beauty standards, they did offer her a sort of protection, "I never lier like I wanted people to see me soft," she says, "Growing up in kansas City, my morn would always be tike. If they hat you, you hit them back "" That rock energy, as she describes it, even seeped into what she wore "But I think that there's so much power in water" She's sure to point out that suits thertuselves aren't insately motherical to softness, so as not to allegate anyone.

I stumble through some of my questions on her gender and sexuality, because I understand how wettel is can be to talk publicly about with you are and also to fucit. I have some friends with whom I'm pretty queer, and way more with whom I never acknowledge that part of me. "I'm not obligated to alsure my story," says Janetie. "Nothody's obugated. But I do think it's powerfu, for me to talk and give a name to some of these thines."

As lanche sees it, the fact that we can live a real life and tell us full story is what separates as from the artificial into ligence engines in the headlines when we meer "The way in whitel we have had sets of experiences together in real time, in person, will be the thing that makes as specis."

janelle, of course, foresaw the surge in Al "When Metropolis came out, The Archandroid came out, I was saying hat this is the moment where this is going to happen," she says.

As we speak, Elon Music is fucking up verification on Twitter, and anonymous songwitters are going viral with songs by artificial brakes and Rihannas. It's already getting harder to less what's reas.

This, she says, is akin to Ray Kurzweil's Singularity is Near, a non-fiction book that influenced her androlds, and popularised the idea that one day distinguishing between Al and humanity may be impossible. "So the age of pleasure that I'm in, that we are in," she says, "is the last of life before we're fully integrated."

When Janeile and I catch up on Zoom a few weeks after Wondaland, she is just returned from a robotics conference in Santa Barbara. "I was invited," she says. "With everything happening with 4lt, people are wanting to know my thoughts." She says she got to see mach use made by Soston Dynamics, the Hyundal-owned company that produces a viral robotic dog that has caused controversy across the country after being embraced by Iaw enforcement. Janefie didn't speak there. "I was just listening," she says. "It's not going away, and I think that a to of it has to do with who's programming and what are the values and the morals. Wha are we teaching it? It's complicated. It's nuanced."

With her prior albums, lanelle concocted

dystopian futures to reflect current problems and, flustrate resistance, using a rift between androids and humans to illuminate issues of bigotry. The Age of Pleasure, by contrast, is about relishing what's already been achieved. It's ce ebratory. It's dancing on ashes until they fertilise new life. It's insular, a clearer portrait of her life rather than a defence of it "I also shouldn't have to teach anybody why it's important to protect speer Black life, trans Black life, nonbinary Black life. I shouldn't have to make an album about it," she says after I note that building empathy was a goal of hers in the Dirty Computer ara, "I don't even think that anybody should have to tell a story of empathy for you to get that," she says now

"This album is not about a fight," she says of The Age of Pleasure. "It's about, wing it an ossis created by us for us. Even with everything going on in the world, this is our moment to breathe together, mappologetically taking this bear to enour to furth an and live."

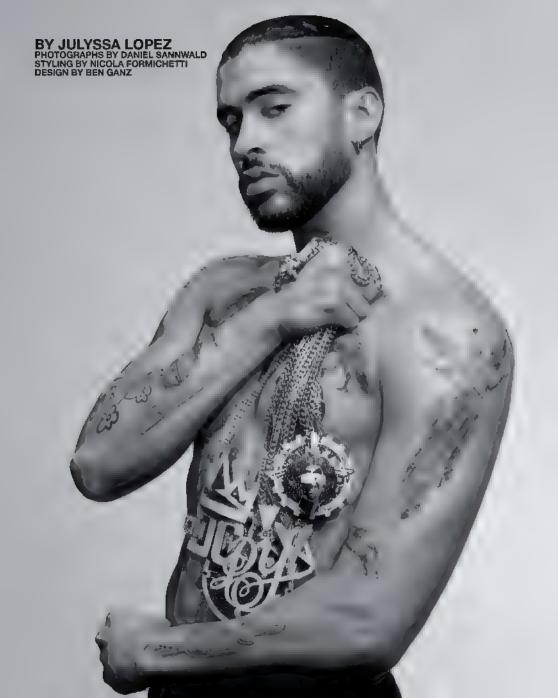
The freedom and compassion of the Everyday People parties at Wonda, and grounded her in this. "I saw strangers smiling at each other, the women feeling comfortable enough to take oil their tops and get in the pool," she says. "If somebody had drank too mach and they were shrowing up, you would see somehody who didn't know this person pull their hair back. Little things like that were so incredible to me. And if, was not actively saying. "Say present, slay present, stay crosser." It would mass at those blues.

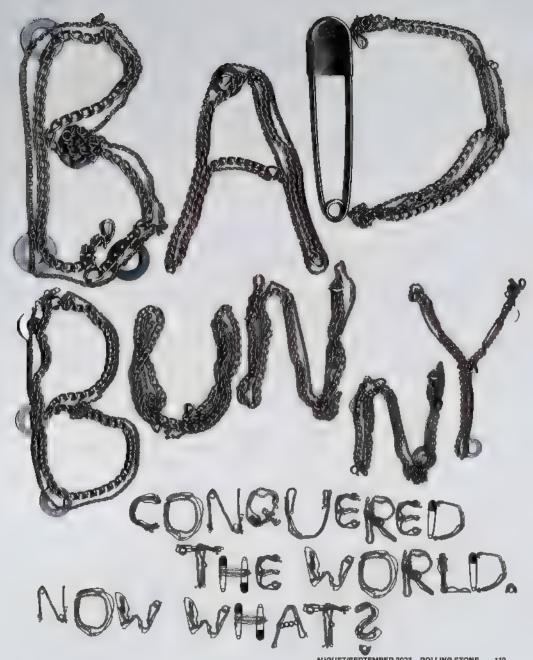
A week and a hall later, when I see Janelle one last time, she's in the throes of a very different kind of event. It's one or the Mer Gaa's most storted afterparties, atop New York's Standard hotel, and she's the bost. Billie Eillish. Olivia. Rodrigo and Lil Nas X are among the slate of estrettsfinment eilite who come by.

Janelle shape-shifts from MC to performer seremoding the crowd atop the horseshoe-shaped bar once again singing on the furniture. Earlier in the evening, she wore a Thom Browne coat inflated by a circular tent of a dress to the Gals. Now, she strips down to the sparkling black and white bikint she had underneath to belt. Float, a look that's a bit of her furedo past and a kill of her bare-body present. She entists as a fin a toast. "I've been in the age of uncertainty," she says. "But tonight, this year, we are in the age of uncertainty beauting to the says."

Her DJ, Kwabena, plays a reggae remix of Beyonce's 'Party' before Janelle performs Lipstick Lover' publicly for one of the first times. The two songs are a perfect match in bounce and BPM, just alse they're practised poolside at Wondaland West. The same friends from Janelle's game night sing and gyrace beside her, drawing the crowd deeper into the moment

and their new world.







ackstage, minutes before Bad Bunny's headwhing set at Coachelta, everyone seems to be running on pure advensine. A group of dancers are climbing a set of stairs toward their marks when a security marks when a wardrobe designer in their midst and

refuses to let him pass. "He's the designer!" one woman shrisks, her voice crackling with the anxiety of countless things that could go wrong.

A gate flings open and Kylie and Kendall Jenner pass through the backstage area, leaving me so surprised that I wheel around and almost hit Kylie with my backpack. Nearby, a troop of fans breaks into a sprint, trying to get into a private area just in front of the stage that's rapidly filling up with celebrities from all over the world. Eventually, the Jenners, Blackpink's Jennie, Rosé and Jisoo, Mexican singer Paso Plums and Halley and Justin Bleber all stand there to watch Bad Bunny make history in real time.

The growd radiates a chaotic, uncontainable sneegy, understanding that there will be a precise before and effect the moment. Bad Bunny is about to become the first Latino solo act and first Spanish-language artist to headline Coschella in the festival's 24-year history.

Screens Hicker, As the audience roars a few decibels louder in anticipation, Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio is standing onstage in the dark, a mantra running through his head: Thank you, God, thank you, life, for letting ms do this. It's one of the only private moments he lets himself have during the performance—if he gets sidetracked by any thought, he tends to forget his lyrics, and this event is too bis for distractions.

Martinez dives into his set, blasting through hits from Un Vereno Sin Ti, his world-conquering album from last year. He packs in detailed video tributes to sales and reggaeton, recounting the music's history and honouring artists from previous generations. "There were a lot of people way before me who did huge things," he tells me later, "Sometimes people forget or, who knows, maybe gringos weren t paying as much attention. But now that the focus is on us. I wanted to make it clear there's been a long road before me." Partway through his set, he brings out reggaston pioneers Jowell Y Randy and Nengo Flow for 'Safaera', the voltale, constantly morphing perreo mini mix, made up of old-school beat flips and samples that capture the spirit of Puerto Rico's marquesina parties.

And then comes an unexpected hurdle. Martinez wanted to surprise the

audience with a special owest - someone he dinever collaborated with, someone no one would ever guess. In the final weeks of rehearsals, he made a call to Post Malone. who was down to help out, even though the two had never met in person. Malone pops up partway through the show and joins Martinez for acquetic versions of 'Yonaguni' and 'La Canción' Unfortunately, as Malone begins strumming, the mic on his guitar cuts out, and the two of them stand there, fumbling with a gord for a few excruciating minutes. "I was worried about him." Martinez says later, "When I saw his face, it was like, 'This can't be happening. So that's when I took the lead and was like. 'Don't worry, don't worry," Martinez gets the growd to sing along so he can finish the tracks a cappella, even as Malone keeps

"It's funny and also frustrating that people think they know about the lives of celebrities. They think they know the story of your life, your interior thoughts, your romantic life. In reality, they don't know at all"

plucking away on a silent guitar. "The most important reaction to have was not to lose my head," Martinez receils. He eventually peels off on a jet ski, part of the elaborate stage design, and sings a law tracks with Jisayco while Melone stays right there, danoling and vibing out until the show is

In the end, the two-hour set was unprecedented and imperfact, historic and human. As soon as it was over, Martinez hopped in a car and headed back to the house in Patm Springs he rented during the (satival. He took is shower. He ate a bowl of oursel. And within 16 minutes, he fell fast saleep, "I said down and went to bed, tranquilito, franquilito." Calmiy, calmiy, just another day in the life of a global megistar.



o you think Bad Burny took time off after Coachella? Of course he didn't. Five days after the performance, he's treikking out to Lucerne Valley — the dry, cracked terrain that's served as a backdrop for Westerns like Stagecoach and horror films like The Hills Have Eyes - to shoot the video for his newest song, 'Where She Goes'. The moody, lovelorn track tells the elory of a one-night stand over a breakneck Jersey-club best. The title is meant to be a tease: "I like to make people wonder and make them think I'm releasing a song in English because people are jodiendo, like statetata," he says, mimicking the nonstop chatter he's been hearing on social media. He wrote it in Los Angeles sometime in February, after revisiting a track his producer MAG sent him There's apeculation online that it's about his rumoured relationship with Kendall Jenner, but when I ask what inspired it, he only says, "coses de le vida" "things in life".

Before the shoot, a text went out to the crew, urging everyone to weer face masks because of intense desert winds. Stiliz, Martinez's frequent director, helped come up with the video concept, which involves Martinez specing through the desert in a vintage Rotts-Royce as a series of visions — a women with angel wings, with horses kloking up dust — flash by

Martinez rolls up to the set and bounces directly into his traiter to get ready for the first shot. As he changes in the back, a few duys from his team -Including his manager Nosh Assad and orestive opnoultant Jenthony Oliversa are hanging around a small kitchen, watching Los Cangrelaros de Santuros, a Puerto Rican basketball team Martínez and Assad co-own, play Los Vaqueros de Bayamón. By the time Martinez emerges in navy-blue trousers and a studded lacket, a heated discussion about fizzy drinks has erupted; one side of the room argues that they're always better in a can, the other defends the merits of fountain drinks. Martinez steps in, settling the debate: "A can. There's no comparison," he says. "The only thing that can stand up to it - because of the nostatola factor is a fountain drink you get at the movies."

It feels like he's talking about a remnant of his old life, when he was a college kid bagging groceries at a supermarket and making bests in his room - worlds away from where he's at now. Over the past year, he's reached a new stratosphere of stardom; Un Verano Sin Ti became the biggest album in the world in 2022, according to the IFPI (and the moststreamed in the US), beating out Beyonce and Taylor Swift while making history as the first Spanish-isinguage LP to receive a Grammy nomination for Album of the Year. He had a memorable cameo in Bullet Train alongeide Brad Pitt. He was Spotliy's most-streamed artist for the third year in a row and broke the world record for the





highest-grossing tour in a calendar year. He's done sil of this fearlessly and without compromise. He's refused to make concessions to the Anglo market, challenged gender norms with his sense of style, and lifted up Puerto Rican and other Latino communities in the process. His music is unabsahadly political but also stylistically unpredictable, delivered in a one-of-a-kind baritone that's made him the people's ionn.

All of it has culminated in a level of fame that means he's virtually everywhere - even at Walmert, where, just the other day, one of his team members found an entire unauthorised Bad Bunny magazine. There's a copy of it sitting in front of me. so I flip through it and find a guiz inside called the Rabbit Test. I hand it to him and joke that he should take it. Some stuff, like what profession his mom and dad had in Puerto Rico (a teacher and a truck driver), is easy. But he can't remember which of his songs first cracked the Hot 100 (kind of a trick question - It was Becky G's 2017 bit Mayores', which he's featured on) and whose tour record he broke in 2022 (Ed Sheeren), in the end, not even Martinez gets a perfect Rabbit score.

In tairness, his whirtwind career is hard to keep up with. In early 2022, he made his way through North American arenas for El Utilmo Tour Del Mundo Just weeks after his final show, he dropped Un Verano Sin 73 and launched the World's Hottest Tour, which took him to some of the biggest stadyma agrais the globs, He sport the next few months making headlines for bringing out surprise guests like Romeo Santos and Cards B, and for selling out show after show.

His first 2023 performance was a Grammy-opening salvo that honoured his Caribbean roots; a acreenshot of the broadcast's closed captioning describing him as "singing in non-English" went viral. But - and this is where the global ubiquity thing gets complicated - other moments this year went viral, too; an infamous video of him chucking a fan's phone after she shoved into him for a selfle, paparazzi shots of him with Jenner, fans getting frustrated with his quotes about colourism and his song 'El Apagon' (more on all of that in a moment). In between, there were lawsuits, including one filed by an exgirlfriend afleging unauthorised use of her voice on two songs, and a whole lot of opinions online.

In person, Martinez is taller than I imagined, but he tooks younger than 29. Though he's been training for an upcoming appearance at WWE's Backlash event, he's more larky than he is builty, his legs stratched out under a small table in the trailer. His snormous brown eyes stay steady and fixed as he delivers his

thoughts. When he gets riled up, he epeake in quick, animated bursts, especially as he's outlining the complexities of a wild 2023.

He doesn't mind the work, he calls his time on tour intense but also wonderful, a chance to connect with fane. Still, at the end of 2022, he'd been envisioning a time when he'd get to turn inward and focus on himself for a bit. "That's what I've been trying to do without caring about the obstacles, because it's cabron," ha save, employing a word that in this context can only be translated as "fucking hard". He trails off for a second. "I love the world, but I also hate the world," he declares finally, I look at him. surprised, but he's laughing, a slightly mischlevous gijnt in his eye. "That should be the cover: 'I love the world but sometimes I hate it."

There's a kind of levity to how he says it. He's finding the humour in all of this, smiling styly and refusing to take things too seriously. But he's also being honest: "Check the," he continues. "Before 2022 was over, I said in an interview, '2023 le going to be for me, to rest, to work on my physical health, on my mental health, to have my apisce, to enjoy, to be happy.' And then 2023 starts with cabronerie."

How to translate that one? Siltinees? Puckery? He's talking specifically about the social media uproar that followed the cellphone thing, the grim Irony of wishing for a quiet year and getting chaos. But he also refuses to let that kind of thing get in his way. "At the end of the day, I don't care what people think," he says. This is, after all, the guy who has made an entire brand out of doing exactly what he wants - and his current goal is to keep doing that. even through the demands of hyper-stardom and a career that keeps expanding at warp speed.

A few minutes later, he heads out into the desert to shoot. He knew the sandstorms were coming, but didn't anticipate how strong they'd be. He returns to the trailer, wind-whipped and flushed, rubbing together rad, chapped hands, but then he's on his way again. Before I head home, I make out his figure in the distance, standing there battling the elements.



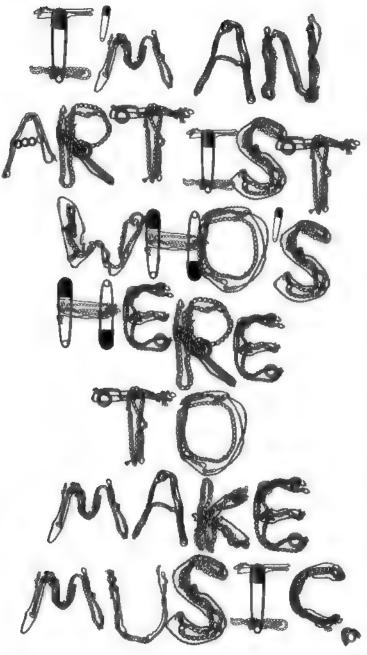
n January, Martinez vacationed in the Dominican Republic, He was walking down a street with friends when fans started rushing over to asy





BUT I ALSO HATE THE WORLD, THAT SHOULD BE THE CONER: I THE WORLD DWELIN LATE TOTO





bi. "People were recording," he says. "I love going to D.R., so I was waving to everyone, like, "Que in que!" Suddenly, a woman jumped in front of him for a selfle. "That person got right on me, leaned directly on my body," he says. His immediate instinct was to toss the phone.

Did he feel bad shout it? "The next day," he says, throwing his hands in the air. But he felt his personal apace had been invaded, and he adds that he clidn't toes it into the ocean, as some outlets reported. "Bro, that cellphone clidn't break. It exists. It bothers me that people haven't said that. I didn't throw that phone into the water, I threw it into some bushes." He claims the woman picked it up right where it landed, "She has it. She should upload the video," he says, chuckling dryly.

Arguments about his behaviour raged online; some defended him, while others — including a tew reggestor artists — thought lobbing a fan's personal property went too far. Martinex locked down his social media and retreated to a manaion he reportedly bought for \$8.5 million in the Hollywood Hills.

After announcing he would be part of the Baoklesh wreating event, which was held in Puerto Rico in May, he started working with a WWE treiner. He caught up on TY shows and movies – he's been rewatching Game of Thrones because Oliveres has never seen it, and he's worked through Apple TV-5 Strinking, starring Jason Siegel as a grieving therapist who takes an active role is his patients! Ives.

Martinez has also got into vinyl from the 70s, a period he says has been inspiring his music. He was browsing a record store in Santa Monica when he found an album by the Puerto Ricae strist José Felicaeno, sending him down a rebbit hole into the singer-songwriter's 60-year career, Yes, there's the Christmas classic Feliz Navidad', but there are also 19 Grammy nominations, 56 albums, and his stripped-down, folksy take on 'The Ster-Spangled Bamaer' in 1988 that was met with such outrage that racists began calling for Felicaeno to be deported, even though Puerto Ricens are US citizens.

"It struck me that I think a lot of younger people don't know how big he was," Martinez explains. "People are like, 'Oh, Bad Bunny le breaking ground with gringes! No, papi — José Feliciana was breaking ground with gringes since the 70s, you hear ma? He was doing worldwide tours, he was in London, singing in English, singing to Anglophone audiences."

in some ways, Feliciano's story reflects an ahistorical view of Latin music perpetuated by Anglo media; the idea that Latin artists exist in boom cycles, only relevant when they're deemed popular by Angio spdiences. Latin music as growing rapidly — last year it generated more than \$1 billion in revenue in the US alone, a 23.8 per cent increase from the previous year (a lot of that was driven by Martinez). But focusing on sales numbers and commercial viability can flatter decades of art and ersas towering Latin figures who've been an integral part of American musical hatory.

This kind of nerrative was something that Martinez wanted to reverse at Goschella. One way to do that, he thought, was to invite Feliciano onstage with him buring the festival's second weekend, the 77-year-old artist stepped in for an emotional moment, playing the scoustle portion Post Malone had a week before. (Feliciano had better luck with the mics.)

Martinez also included those tribute videos - an entire history lesson folded into the show, paying homage to Cuban seles legende like Celia Cruz and La Lupe. and reggaston titans like Tego Calderón and Daddy Yankee, while tracing the Black roots of these genres and the influences across the Caribbean that have shaped them. The approach was similar to another one of Martinez's Interventions on a gatekept world stage; the Grammys, where, in February, he put distinctly Puerto Rican musical traditions like bombs and plens on display. He ended his show with cebezudos giant character heads used in festivale and processionals - representing beloved cons from the island, like baseball legend Roberto Clemente, singer and composer lemael Rivers and others

Martinez's gestures often culminate in more direct action, too, like when he cut his 2019 tour in Europe short to join Puerto Rico's protests against then-Governor Ricardo Rosselló, Last July, he blasted LUMA Energy - the private company that's mismanaged Puerto Rico's power grid - and current Governor Pedro Pierluisi at a show in San Juan, "Pierluisi and all the dick suckers who run Puerto Rico, fuck off " "He represents different things at different moments, but I think he always represents Puerto Rico," says Venessa Díaz, a professor at Lovole Marymount University who teaches a class called Bad Bunny and Resistance in Puerto Rico. "I think that he always represents a Puerto Rican spirit of resistance and struggle and the complexity of life there.

Since he started making music, Martinez has sought to capture the depth of Puerto Rican identity and Caribbean traditions. That might be why it was jarring for some fans when he appeared on the cover of Time in March and discussed. El Apagón', arguably his most political song

alone the protects. The title means 'The Blackout', a reference to the power outages that have plagued Puerto Rico since Hurricane Maria, and it celebrates the beauty of the island while calling out gentrification and displacement there-Speaking to Time, Martinez shared that he wrote the song's line "Ahors fodos gweren ser Latino, pero les faits sazon" ("Now everyone wants to be Latino, but they re mesting flavour") after feeling trustrated with the way certain artists seemed to embrace Latino identity only when it was convenient. But, he added, "Now that feeting has passed me. It's not like I feet like that right now."

The quotes riccoheted across social media, where they were translated, mangled, and misinterpreted as Martinez saying he regretted making 'Ef Apagón'. A backlash erupted, one that roughly

"When I saw [people saying] I regretted writing 'El Apagón', it shocked me," he says, referring to the ode to Puerto Rico he released last year. "I would never say that in my fucking life"

coincided with paparazzi releasing photos of Martinez and Jenner hanging out. Everyone, it seemed, syddenly had an opinion about Martinez, "Sadly, Bad Bunny has been consumed by the gringo market... How does he regret writing one of the most roonic lines in "El Apagón?" one person wrote on Twilter, Another went viral with a virulent Tik Tok epeach calling Martinez's outlings with Jenner as exempte of "the power of a fully colonised mind"

Mertinez seemed to address the furore in an impromptu speech at Coachelis: "You won't get to know the resime through a video on instagram, an interview, or a TikTok. If you really want to get to know me, I invite you to my home."

When I sak him to clarify what that speech meant, he's quiet for a second. "It's a delicate issue," he says, finally. "That interview was taken out of context, so i'd hate for the same thing to happen with the one. But i'll try to explain it what I said was, like, people are funny — it's furny and also frustrating to see how people really think they know about the lives of celebrities, of what they think, the

what they do day to day. They think they know the atory of your life, your interior thoughts, your romants life, but, is reality, they don't know at all.

"When I saw [people saying] that I had regretted writing 'El Apagón', It shocked me, like when did I ever say that in the interview? I would never say that in my fucking life," he continues, it frustrated him because of what the song meant. "It was a whole journey, like the process that began with aomething patriotic, and then the party and the messing around, and later the sentimental part, the conscience in it. I siwaye say that a the life of people in Puerto Aico, we're proud of being Puerto Rican, we love to celebrate and act like nothing matters, and then we clash equinet a reality that is often very painful." If ask him who the infamous "Ahora todos guleren ser Latino" line was about. "Obviously, I'm not going to tell you," he says, laughing lightly. But he does share that his mitial frustration was almod at two women in perticular.)

The place in the Hollywood Hills marks Martinez's first time living outside of Puero Rico. "He's an introvert," Assad tells me later. "I don't went to use the word low-key' because that sounds oliché, but he resily is." Moet of his more olicle has been ground for years, he and Oliverss went to the same high school, and he's known his photographer and searstant Jomar Dávila since he was around 11. "To this day, he's with his eight best friends, and they're working," Assad says. "They're not his entourage, they're his family."

Living in California has let Mertinez experiment with new routines, new places, meeting new people," as he pute it. LA siso allows him to move around a little more easily; in Puerto Rico, he tends to osuse a some when he goes out. "I like to go est at a restaurant osimhy, go see a movie, relax, go for a wall," he says of LA. But evenually, he'll go back. "Puerto Rico's my home," he says. "I don't see myself gatting old abreshees other than Puerto Rico."

For the time being, though, he's been learning into his Hollywood era — attending Beyoncé and Jay-Z's Oscars afterparty, greeting the Weskind at Coschella. When I tell him it seems like he's been expanding his circle of friends in Los Angeles, he's quiet for a second. "Yeah, I think so. I've been a little complicated when it comes to getting to know people my whole life. At school, I was always really close to my friends, and I was friendly, but also closed off. During this time, I've been trying to socialise more, get to know more people."

Even though his outings with some of those friends — Jenner in particular — have become aplashy tabloid fodder, there's a lot he wants to hold for himself He's protective about his personal life: "







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bout a week after the desert video shoot. Martinay is at Nasi Verb's Mark Hotel, meeting with the French designer Simon Porte Jacquemue shead of the Met Gala. room

serene - Oliveres puts on a playlist of lowfi bands I've never heard of - and Martinez stands in front of the mirror quietly. wearing a pristine white suit with 26 feet of floral fabric trailing behind (Ollverse says the look was inspired by photos of Karl Lagerfeld with his cat, Choupettel. Martinez tries on two sets of trousers before deciding on a slimmer out Jacquemus had designed, then turns to reveal a backless blazer, adorned with a sliver body chain featuring a "J" charm dangting down his spine.

Martinez's second sopearance at the Met Gals to far less nerve-wracking then his first. "Last year, I felt like I was the new kid in school." he says when we get back into the par and head to the nearby hotel where he's staying, "I think this year I'm going to feel # lot more comfortable " Plus, he enjoys the process of getting ready: "I like dressing pretty."

His Met Gale outfit reflects the gender-fluid style he's known for. He's

worn neil pollsh and bright-pink minidresses over the years, and in 2020, he was fully in drag for his 'Yo Perreo Sola' video. His consciousness-relaing goes beyond style, too: he's epoken out about transfermicides and gender violence in Puerto Rico, and last summer, he made headlines for kissing a male dancer onstage during his YMAs performance GLAAD gave him its 2023 Vanguard Award. which Ricky Martin presented to him while applauding him for encouraging LGBTQ communities to "dance, sing, love, and live lives authentically"

Back in his hotel room, Martinez walks to a turntable and ques up Fleetwood Mac's Rumours, I ask him what else he's been listening to, and he flips through his phone, reading some of his playlists out loud. "I've been listening to Luis Miguel a lot," he says, referring to the famous mariach: and bolero balladeer. He lists off a few more Mexican acts that have been blowing up lately: Grupo Fronters, Peso-Pluma, Eslabon Armado. Thera's a range of genree, too: "Radiohead," he says, namechecking albums like OK Computer and In Reinbowe, "Phob ..." He trips over the name slightly, "Phoebe Bridgers?"

"Whether I'm at home or with the guys, we listen to everything; reggaeton, trap, bachata, salsa, música Mexicana, banda, regional, porridos tumbados." he says. He sees a newer generation of artists as constant motivators: "I see them tearing it up, and it makes me want to tear it up even harder."

Rome of those newer artists include

"I think that's where I clash with people. Everyone sees life how they want, and everyone can think what they want. I don't have an obligation to anyone - the slightest obligation to anyone"

the guys from Grupo Fronters, who Martinez brought onstage the second week of Coachella to play 'un x100to', a song they'd collaborated on, Martinez helped curate Rolling Stone's Future 25, featuring favourite artists on the rise, suggesting everyone from the innovative singercongwriter-violinist Sudan Archives to Puerto Rican acta ilke trap dynamo Young Miko, traiblazing rapper Villano Antiliano, and urbano singer Omer Courtz. He also shouts out Pero Plume, the breakthrough musica Mexicana secuation. Martinez says that when they met for the first time at Coachella, Peso Pluma immediately applogrand for a moment at a recent concert, when he shouted that 'Ella Baila Sola', a song he made with the band Estabon Armado, had surpassed "el pendejo de Bad Burny" ("the asshole Bad Bunny") to reach number one on Spotify.

"I was like 'You don't need to say sorry," Martinez saya, laughing "I said, 'I remember when I was young, in your position, and would get excited.

Martinez is still young, but he's become an outsize figure to other artists, fans, and even academics. As we talk, there's a two-day symposium coming up called Thinking with Bad Bunny: Cultural Politics and the Future of Puerto Rico, organised by the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, with help from Diaz and Wellesley professor Petra Rivera-Ridonu. The idea that there's an entire university event deducated to his pareer is a tittle shocking for him. "I'm like, 'What in the world?' I would have liked to take that class in college to get an A," he jokes.

He's flattered - but he tries not to get paught up in all the recognition, "I have in the back of my mind that I want to do big things and make a difference, but I do it for myself," he says. "I don't do it hoping that at some point, they'll offer classes about me at universities, I don't think anyone thinks that way."

Surely, being a global superstar comes with some pressure? Martinez rejects the question. "If I ever feel pressure, it's because it's coming from me. If I want to do something better, It's because of me. I don't let myself give into pressure from other people, I don't feel pressure to be the best. Never, ever, ever, I do this because I love it."

Yet Martinez's entire pareer has positioned him as the most visible Latino in music right now: because of that, the expectations and responsibilities fans place on him paly seem to multiply. particularly when it comes to speaking up about political and social issues. ") think that's where I clash with people," he says. "Everyone sees life how they want, and everyone can think what they want. I don't have an obligation to anyone - the allohtest obligation to anyone.... | have what I think here," he says, pointing to his temple. "I can say it to my friende, I can vent to my mom. I can vent talking to myself, but I don't need to share that with the public. I'm not a superhero. I'm an artist who's here to make music because I love making music."

He sees a lot of artists who make corporate-feeling statements that ring false, "They'll put up a measage that thek publicist wrote on social media, and people will applaud it just because they did it to check off a box," he says. He knows that in some ways, his music and his example have been more effective than any statement he could make

"I'm not very good at standing in front of people and saving a speech." he says. "Any time I have to accept an award and say something, it's, like, the worst time in my life on an artist But I think that's exactly the appoific reason that I'm an artist. The way I feel most comfortable saying something is through a song or a video. People who have a talent for talking or speaking for something in society should do it. I feel I did that part with my song." @

Across the genre map and around the world, these are the artists who have us most excited about the future of music in 2023 and beyond



glorilla

The Recody Independent MC from Memphis, Tennesse, is the hotlest star in Southern represent after her beachtrough year she's just werming to

WHEN OLORILLA ARRIVES at a Hollywood bowing alley, she's clearly off the clock, cosy and happy to be among amitian faces. No cameras, no fans—just her team, the two friends she came with, and a bundful of security to ensure—stays that way. She's relieved, at least in this moment, that no one is coming over to speak to ben in two days, it will be exactly one year since the release of the breakout single, "E.N.F. (Le's Go)", a spirited anthem for being newly siting-le that divided her. Je into before "F.N.F. and after it's the song that kick-started her careed, the one that has already taken her to the Grammys and Coacheta, where she performed on the main

stage the two weekends before we meet • "I had no been newhere at side of Memphia, Mississapp). Atlan a," she says. Now, she is seeing the world headlining tout is, and sittling courtistic at NRA games. There is one thing she hasn't ever got around to thought bowling. Upon hearing his revelation, her companions offer a quick of the first few in the traditional one handed way, before she switches to an easier two-handed grip—she gets the first strike of the day to Moschino sides to boot. • It's a convenient distillation of how

things have gone so far in the 23-year-old rapper's life; set a goal, put in some

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BYBRIANA YOUNGER PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOL BIRSEK



effort, make a few adjustments, and believe tuttli it pays off which may happen sooned racher than later in the first quarter of 2022, before the rejease of 'F N F' that Apr.I, she was largely unknown, except perhaps in occur of the behalf of the same of the

Last July, GloRilla signed a deal with fellow Memphian Yo Gottl a CMG laber, home to a host of her hometown's biggest young stars, like Moneybagg Yo, Blac Youngsaa and Blochoy JB. In September, she een her annistakable drawl to the Memphis Gritzkles for the official hype video that the team used to open its season. Her signature dance – a Memphis stuple known as jockin' – continued to spread everywhere, from TikTok to the NFI. The design for her Coochella set (or "Gotche lar," as she cased to "eladot a re-creation of the neighbourhood where she grew up, marked by attest signs that read "Frayser Boulevard" and "Dawn Raud"

She also used that performance to pay respect to Gangaia Boo, another Memphis artist on whose shoulders she proudly stands, and who sad y passed away on the first day of 2023. "I really haven't seen anybody give her the recognition that she deserves, and so I feel like it was important," Gio says. "She was an OG in female itan, She deserves her flowers."

When Gio was still, grinding it out, Gangsta Boo was an early supporter who would text flo and the friends to set them know she was proud of them and endourage them to keep going. Facing a far less friendly industry in her time, Boo never got to grace stages like Goachella on her own (though Run the Jeweis did bring her out as a guest in 2015 and 2016), but as her .998 classic "Where Dem Donas At" blared through the Southern California desert this spring, Gio sommoned her mightly legacy, as if to remind people of who she is and where she's from.

BEFORE THERE WAS GLORILLA, there was Gloria Halielujah Woods, the eighth of 10 kind and the second youngest of four girls. Her childhood was marked by church and fighting with her siblings, though they always had each others' backs. "I really do think! Was a boy because! hung around my brothers more than my sisters," she says, which may have everything to do with the tomboylsh quality that's only broadened her aliane.

Her youngest siblings were some of her very first Ians. "When I first started rapping, I don't whink none of them was taking me so serious," she recalls. "They were like, 'OK, she's just trying something.' But as time went on, they was supporting me... My litle brother he was always like, 'Man, why you ain't been up yet?' I know they believed in me for real."

Though her rise ends itself we.l to an overligh success narrative, she was recording and releasing music for severs years before she landed on "F.N.F". But that song 'truly did change her "fe a,mos. .mmediately. "Less han a week before I blew up, my car got repoed," she recalls. "I was By ng with my fir end because I had got put ou, my apartment. I was going through a lot. I have always been the friend that everybody count on and depend on, but I was going, through "real bad." Then came the breakthrough that she compares to winning her own American drean.



She dilong thought there was something special about "F.N.F. that maybe it could be a special about "F.N.F. that maybe it could be a hit. Then again, she's always felt like all of her songs could be hits. she's never been short on confidence. But uploading a snipper to the video-sturing app Triller and watching it go viral confirmed her nunch. When she officially dropped the song on the last Friday in April 2022, labels started calling the following morthing, ready to fly her out. "I didn't know it was going to happen so soon," she says, "but I knew one day it was going to happen."

There's a running joke on social media that GoRilla is a gospe, rapper, and that her other signature hit, the Cardi B collab "fromcrow 2", is a kind of praise and worship song. Glo says that her time growing up in church aid a spiritual foundation that sustains her today "I'm big on fatth, and I'm big on manifestation.

Faith without work is dead," she says, quoting the book of James. "You have to actually work towards it and believe it."

Her EP 'Anyways, Life's Great., ', released In November, was sho, through with that unwavering conviction, combined with a hastier's mentality. The opening track finds her contemplating her purpose and reminding those who may wish her all that God sees an The project also served as a primer for her n inble approach Songs (ke PHATNALL and 'Nut Quick' showcased her brash, unbothered nosture, while others, like No More Love' and 'Out Loud Thanking' took a more solemn. introspective tone. All of it is naw and honest, cut with a cheeky sense of humour and an anti-defeatist ou look. That tone is wha made 'F N E.' and Tomorrow 2' so undenable .o. both women and men alike - a rarity for lemale rappers historically, but a dynamic that's changing thanks to artists like Glo.

She attributes the appeal, in part, to her sings ar voice. "I know a to of dudes, they won t ride around listening to no girl that sound like a girl, because they going to be like, 'Oh, I'm being pussy.' But they hear me," she says, dropping that her lowest vocal register, "and now [they say], 'She slick sound like one of us." She also feels that her chest beating attitude slots in easily with her male counterparts. "I say shit that's for females, but It's stuff that niggas can say in reverse," she argues. "I actually like going through shi, sometimes, because it makes me perfect my craft." And yrics about self-assurance, overcoming obstacles, and indulging in the spoffs of success - Well, those are as universal as they come.

For her apcoming full-length debut, clio aims to reveal more of herse I and herselshiftles. She was never going to be a one-hat wonder, now, with multiple hits under her belt, she wang people to know she's no one rick pony, either "I don't wan, to be absended as Just a ratchet rapper, you know what I'm saying?" she says. "I'm going for different vibes - stuff that everybody can relate to. Of coarse I'm going to put my ratchet, fun shit out, because that's what I blew up with [But I want to actually talk to people, act them know... I can tak some reas shit. I can go grosse. I can do a liftle 888."

The anticipation around her cext move has her slightly on edge, she admits. But her faith in herself isn't about to waver

"I ain't going to lie, I'm super nervous. I know peopie expect so much out of me," she says. "When they mention my name, they put me up there with the big dogs like Card., Nick., Megan. I'm like, 'Damn, I got to deliver like them. This got to be a Grammy-nominated abum. And it's soins to be. "@

babyface ray

BACKSTAGE AT New York's Webster Hell about 30 minutes before he's due to go onstage. Babyface Ray sips rean from a white Styrofoam cup while a photographer anapa pictures of his extremely bright platinum chains, Born Marcellus Rayyon Register, he'ii one of the top volces in Detroit's street-rap scene. with a level of fame in the city that has reached the point where people often recognise his family "Domn nost every day, fans ste into your parsonal life," seys Ray, who's a father of six at age 32. "They know my name, my girl's name, my mom's name, t's weird." On repord, Ray a a gently mensoing vocal presence, with a flow that can resemble a flat offect. Telking to him suggests that he's being under expressive on purpose, as



stays collected through the wickedest of times. And there have been plenty of those. He goes over his set-list sequence for conight with a DJ: his 2022 hit 'Sinceraly Face' which has six million YouTube views, is going second. Before he heads out to the stage. Ray tells me he's releasing a new mixtage soon. "It's really me in my bag," he says. He won't give away any more details, but adds. "The summer's тіпа." дувом витова



balming tiger

WARN GLOBAL AUDIEMOSS think about the most exciting ears from South Kohen, their minds likely go first to bicokbuster pop phenomenons like BTS and Blackpink. But there's a thriving underground acene taking thape in Seoul, too, sed by groups like Balming Tigar — a multimember, wildly delectio-counding collective that make a big splash when they played BXSW this spring. "We don't come togather generaties," wile," says Omega Bapiers, one of several up-from bestormers in Balming Tigar." We also come togather se a spirit and energy." When his joins forces with the rest of the group — performent segurant, by write, and Mudd the student, producers 3 an Yawn and Unanikable, video directors and Ou and Lesiuho, vitual artist Chanhee Hong, D. Abyes, and writer henore Hiwang.— Take get exerything from griftly hip-hop trains to adulty R&B vocals. "What we want for the future generation in Korea is to show you don't have so be the pretitiest most hendicines, or perfect person. Omega Saplen adds. "Just follow your heart You see Balming Tiger and say." Bould just do what went to folking do." Calestics Parket.

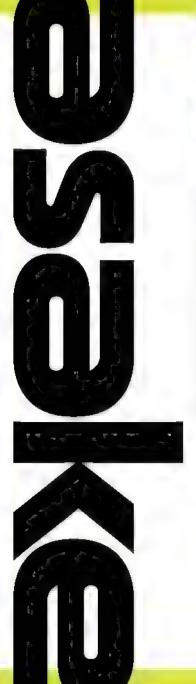
destroy lonely

DESTROY LONKEY to in the signature all-black attire when meet him the spring, except for his hot-pink Merni slippers. His allow friend Ren Careno (lights a blant in the studio where they're oursently dooking up something new. "Where else would be?" eaks Lonely "This shift always going to be important. How the fusik could I say that I aw me without appling?" Lanely brake out an Thiffolk last summer with his auper-catchy, feshion-forward single "NOSTYLIST". A few weeks after we talk, hell release his debut album, if Looks Could Kill, to the delight of his nearly four million organity is Spothy listened.

consty grow up freestyling—his father is also a rapper—but his influences are fer-ranging. He draws inspiration from Southern scons like Ul Weyne and Young Thug, but also from Deficines and the Cure, resulting in a distinct sound that he refiltes every day.

On a recent tour stop in Thalland. Lonely was surprised to find plenty of local fins of his music and his style. "We are really from the south side of Adlanta and be going all the way across to the other side of the globe, and these people out here talking about. Your music changed my life," he says. "Then you look at their and they got on all-black or whatever That shit is orazy, it air?" really no way to purit into words." Pleasance Assa







THE TWO HER have been waving for a while before Asake sees them. They re wearing dufty white T-shirts on the balcony of a tall construction project in Victoria Island, an affluent neighbourhood in Lagos, Nigeria. It took them a militate to figure out who was standing in the garden of a nearby restaurant, with his distinctly tean frame and shock of gold dreads but since they did, they've been trying to get his attention.

At first, Assace seems taxen aback, perhaps unsure of how people standing that jitgle up managed to spot ham, but his face lights up after a white, and he waves back. "Make uno no full o," he lowes: "You people should not full."

R's a Sunday morning in early May, and all hough the sun lan't very high yet, the weather is already disagreeably numed. I'm meeting Asake at Nok, a restaurant located behind Alára Lagos, one of the city's most famous concept stores.

Around this time last year, just as his single. Sungles, was making waves across the globe, Asake found houseful consumed by fear and uncertainty. "Last year, I was scared," he says we serie into one of the intisate charter his defended in the integrant After Suighe. a cultivatedly une that melds the grittiness of Nigerian street pop with the invigorating groove of South Africa's amapiano – began to sake off, he says, his management fold him he needed to drop an album immediately. "I was loce, "How am I going to do it?" he says between draga off a brant.

in person, Avake, 28, has a small frame, but an imposing personal ty. His large, dark eyes hold a world of expressions, bright with mischief when he begins to crack one of his many jokes, d.m and misty when thinking deeply about a question. The way he stares right the people's eyes when he speaks to them gives the impression that he is not afraid of anyone

After he graduated in the mid-2010s from Obsfemi Awolowo University, where he stated theathearts, Asake moved to Lugos and found himself unmoored for a while. He tried his hand at a number of Jobs in the entertainment industry, including making instagramskis with interfectionness comedian Broda Shaggi. "I was with Shaggi because taidn't have anywhere to stay

after schorn," he says

While he felt in those days that "God is not doing enough for me," he sees that I menow as a necessary step of paying dues. "Those were the days for me o see how the life of en erts runen, is without me being somebody "he easy. "Everybody wan a sible in member one. Everybody in this le, I can bet It leave the justice of our church. You just have to go through some stages and learn, so that when the thing you are graying for happens, you know how to say, 'Ah. yeah, I worked for this shit."

Born Ahmed Oldiade in a modest household, Asake came out: the Afrobeats scene with a sound that was fresh and difficult to put into context. He was grot ided in the storytelling techniques of street-pop artists who came before him. but his sound also bornwed the talking-drum bounce of Fuji music, a genre popular among Nigeria's Yoruba people. He grew up listening to bioneering Fuji acts from

He's gane from grinding in Lagos to selling out shows worldwide with his langue sound. Now, he's trying to stay spiritually grounded amid the chaos.

BY NELSON C.J. PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANNY JEFFERSON





the 40s and 50s like KLDe Ultimate and Ayinde Barrister The latter artist is his favourite to this day. "I love Barrister a int, because of the sour in his voice," he says. "When you talk about music, real music, it is Barrister's for me" He also listened to songs from the Cherubin and Seraphin church, known for its bells and congs drums, and the white gowns members wear to church. "I just like spirituality, songs that can wake your spirit," he says. "I need things to always spirit me."

This combination of influences and sounds, which he perfected on his 2022 debut album.
Mr Money With the Vibe, has made Asake a globa, star Authough he mostly sings in Yoruba and pidgin, two of Nigeria's most widely spoken languages, he has fatts around the world. "He's all about good energy, and "nat's what matters to people," says legendary. Nigerian rapper Chamide, under whose laber Asake is signed in Nigeria, "No matter what anguage you speak, you can feel the emotion in his musk."

Even Asake is still processing what "sides to be that guy. "I thank God," he tells me "Even me, I did not know that, would be that

guy. I was dreaming, the way Nigerians dream that they will be a superstanone day."

On its release last September, Mr. Money With the Vise won rave reviews and recorded the biggest opering weekend for an African album in Appie Music's history. Asake ended up with 124 billion global on-demand streams at 2022, according to Luminate data. He began numerous sold-out world tours, where venues frequently overflowed with lans. The situation fet like it could spin out of control, and in December, it did, two people. Rebecca homeo and Gaby Herchipson died and seven more were injured after a crowd crush at one of his shows at south London. Asake declines to discuss the incident, with me in detail, but at the time, he issued a statement expressing his deviatation.

His experience on tour, including the tragic south London Incident, led film to make a song called "Yoga" when he returned home. It's a thoughtful slow-paced in inder, lined with chains and drums, in contrast to his usual style. "What really inspired the song was the whole London thing that happened," he says. "Everything was fust so overwhelming. After having 5,000 people inside my show, still had over 4,000 people outside mying to enter." "Yoga" was Asake's attempt at finding some inner peace. The song shot straight to quarter int in Nigeria.

In less than a year Asake's life has seen a sharp change in course. To maintain his spiritual group iding, he prays each morning, and he listens to his favourite gospel songs, "I rearned these a, the start of my title" he says. "So I can't longet "them."

Those around Asake say they're doing what they can to keep him grounded in the life he had before fathe came around. "Asake has got heart," his manager, Stephen Nata, tells me. "I know the weight he pulls. He should be walking on air like, people shouldn't be able to access him and all that But Asake's not that kind of guy. He still wants to eat the roadside food he used to eat back in the day. It's just thus he can't go there in get it himself."

After speaking for a wittle, Asake seaves to go into the Alára store. Following him are a security general, a few friends, his manager, and the personal stylls, who began working with Asake earlier this year.

Asake's fashion sense is an ever-evolving thing. Gucci, Rick Owens, and Balenckga are some of its favourite brands, his most notable look was a baggy Balenckgap parts top that helped make hum a rising fashion icon in Nigeria when he wore it ast autumn.

Assize is fully aware of the outsize influence he has now. Looking back, he wishes he'd taken his first US four last autu-min, more seriously. "I would have been more professional, more organised," he says. "Back then I just went onstage myself. I had a bar onstage. I smoked onstage. I was baving fun. Now I understand that you have to plan."

When he headlines London's O2 arena dis August, that's exactly what he'll be doing, "I want fant to come and see a dream come true," he says. "I will give everything I have, and I will just do my best I will make everybody proud."

Before we part ways, I ask Asake what he imagines the future holds. "Only God knows the future, my brother," he says. "But the future is bright. There is light in the future."

omar courtz

MISSESS THE Puerto Ricun singer Omer Courtz was a teenager, he worked at a clothing store in the city of Carolina that was popular with reggaeton stars | ka Farruko, Anuel Ae and Ozune, Years aler when he started making music, he was collaborating with a few of those same artests Playan like, 9 award to be your attendent at that storel" recalls Courts. 25. His tr. a flexible



endlessly adgy sound that combines elements of R&B and tree. The first song he are recorded as 5-andfoloud knose called Volvernos Otra Var, in 2017 — Immediately became a local hit Courtz continued dropping music wille suddying mechanical engineering in college. Evenually, releases like he slick four-long EP Invierno led to a record day with Pithalf Mr. 305 labs. These days, even Bed Burny's a fain. "I think he hes that satickiness, like the chartness stay in your head, he tone of hit volce," says Burny. Courtz says he he seem to the property of the pr

teezo touchdown

THE PRIST THENS Shat grabs you

Touchdown is his fook — aspecially when he has actual nais in his hair. Als music spans everything from pop-punk balleds to contemporary hip-hop tracks. Tesso's highly unorthodox approach has proved irresestable.



to some of intuitie biggest names, from Tyles, the Creator (who featured him on Call Me If You Get Lost) to Madonna, who posed with him in an initiagram photo before the release this year of Teazo's debut allours, Ended up Seing Me

The 3C-year-old Texan credits his father a DJ. for introducing him to artists like Marvin Geye, the Gap Bandland, most importantly, Kraffwetk. "It's something about hearing heavily concentrated electric stuff from your clad," he says.

Still, Teezo's foundation remains rooted in hiphop. "It's definitely hip-hop first, always say am an MC first." That's why take so much protein my permanship and my songwriting, and why take so much pride in my individuality. Those are the two golden rules." say.



water from your eyes

*EXPERIMENTAL POP" is probably the most succinct descriptor for Brooklyn due Water From Your Eyes. But It's also a little bland, which is why singer-sangwriter Reports Brown, 28 (allows it with "falance-punts, question mark?" and "far rock, attrag". Meanwhile, with unentialist-producer Nate Annes, 32, has grown partial to "send-yellor rock." In 60 objectively North Wellow sandwichte, and wall like to nock," he says. The whole conversation is either about or boillient, much like Water Prom Your Eyes' music. Their single "Barkey features fyrics like," One two, three hour! count mountains" a few bers later they semi-including quote Stings. Pieldes of Gold. "Thank nothing about that song that sin't funny to me."

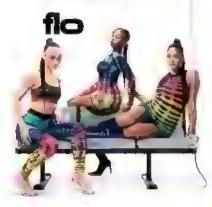
MOTSO LONG ADD. British girl group FLO were trying to persuade their label to drope a tong called Cardboard Box as their debut single. The label wanted to try other songs first, but Joris Douglas, 21, Stello Quaresma, 21, and Renée Downer 20, collectively agreed that the allyely R&B breakup track was the one.

"It's fluit a ching between us think;" says Douglas. "When we're all on the same page, we're a force to be - who's the word?"

"Reckaned with." finishes Querestna.
"That's exactly the one," says Dougles. "When you trust that gut instinct, it really pays off."

Cardboard Box' got more than 34 million Spotify streams, building a fine base for FLO's harmonies and nostalgio early-00s R&B sounds. They just wrapped their first-ever tour, and they've earned co-signs from Missy Elliott and Stormey.

As they work on their debut album, they plan to continue to stand their ground; "I'th very important for everybody to speek up," Quareama stays, "Don't let anybody make you feel like you're being a dive." TOMAR MILE.





peso pluma

PSEC PLUMA woke up one morning in April. still a little sleeps, and learned their Elle Saile Sole — the lovey-dovey serveric collaboration had dropped with the Northern California band

Ealabon Armado — was the biggiest apig in the world. The track shot up to the top of Spotify's Global 100, missing him the first mission Mexicana writist to other that high. And then, just a few weeks leter, he did it again, teaming up with the viral Argentine hitmaker Bizarrap for a freestyle that garanteed 22 million views on You'hab in If We days, and topped the same Spotify other. proving that 'Ella Balle Sole' was no fluke. "These accomplishments mean so much to me,' he says: "The opposit that 'on wave the Mexicana flag up high."

Pluma, whose real huma is Hassan Emilio Kabande Laija, is only 23. He was born in Guadalagera, Mestico, and moved to San Antonic; eventually he started willing songs. "My bookground has influenced my music so mush : "It's where I get my mix of sounds," he seys, His voice, known for a cliatinat rasp, led to a few early projects that turned heads with controversial lyrice in the repro-control stadilloin, His maner efferences his small, thesther light stature, and his mullet has become his signature. The year, nine of his ecogs, including major collaborations with Bocky G. Natanael Cano, and Fuerza Regida leaped onto the Britisbeard Hot 100. "Booml in a moment, he biew up?" Bad Bunny seys, "When that happens, you're like, "I fold you he was coming had!" a.



young

YOUNG MIKE to relaxing on a Solution of the first as we world tour in Gueramab later that inglight. The resting as much as cast," says the Puerto Rioan artist. 24. "The been so busy that if wearf until two days ago that realised I'm starting the tour."

Since releasing her EP Trap littly in 2022, Milko has upended the sound of Latin trap with boundy reachs and incomparable Spenglish lyriotem. Trap Kitty' serred the former tation and andorsements from Bod Bunny and Karol Ci, who have both hivlited her it their ahows in Puerto Rico. Theal she has as much to show people. Life ahe harrit showed people all har tricks yet.' Bod Bunny sers.

Milco is one of very faw openly rebon rappers in the urbano scene. which has been marked by decades of sexhibitive boys? I old carearders. But ahe would never hide who she a. "Heaving the courage to talk about how they are what makes my project so different," she says, "swarce sout-earning."





Since seemingly appearing out of nowhere las, summer, Minll, Hanni, Danlege, Haerin and Hyein - who are all between the ages of 15 and 19 have alken K-pop by storm. Their four-song deba-EP made them one of last year's fastest rising emerging artists, with more than 83 million global on-demand streams according to data from Luminate. In less than a year, they've scored branding deals with McDonald's, Levi's and Coca-Cola and that doesn't even cover the fast forambassadorships with Gucel, Chanel, Louis Vulitor and more "We say his : lot, but it ready is hard to believe," Danteke says in English with a big smile

In late February, the members have gathered at a studio in seongsu, dong, a hip Seoul neighbourhood that a transformed over the years from an industrial area of small fact ories and auto-body shops to a trendy spot full of cafes, galleries and fast ion populps. There are several huge Newjeans billboards scattered throughout the neighbourhood, just a block away from one of them, Newjeans are there in person, loughing and chairing.

Though they re disarmingly down to-earth. New Jeans are part of one of the biggest companies in Seou, 's entertainment Industry. Their label, ADOR (an acronym for All Boors One Room), is a subsidiary of the globa, powerhouse HYRE Corporation, ADOR is led by president Min Hee Jin, a veteran of the K pop Industry who previously worked with major acts like Girls' Generation. They've worked together to build a strong visual concept for New Jeans that embraces Y2K-era nostalgia, from their music videos and fashion choices down to the fonts used in their marketing materials.

The day we meet in person happens to be the day it's revealed that their single Ditto' has broken the record for the daily charts on Melon (essentially the Spotify of South Korea), having been at number one for 10 consecutive weeks. "Things like that are also just as unberievable to us: "What's going on? What just happened?" Danielle

says (She and Hanni are both Austra ian, Minji, who lived in Canada briefly, is also Buent in English i

The surprise release of the 'Attention' video assi summer, with almost no advance information about the group, was unconventional typically. Kip opiabels tease their new acts by revealing members one by one before releasing any music, as a way of generating excitement But Newjeans strategy worked. The next day, 23 July, they released their even more addictive single Hype Boy, along with four different music videos that told connecting stories, and the world finally learned Newtenior names.

"Before debt ting, our president would invite us each into her aome for a meal, and there was one time she invited us over as a group," Hyein, the youngest member, recalls "She asked us, How would you

"we say this a lot, but it really is hard to believe," says danielle. "what's going on? what just happened?"

want to roll out teasers for your debut? I himk she was curious about what we would say, I just said, 'I thank it would be fun to just have no teaser at all,' and she said 'Oh? That's actually what we re planning on doing!"

The 'New Jeans' EP exceeded 444,000 pre-orders with 'n four days, setting a new record for a debut EP by a K-pop girl group at the time. This year, they broke their own record by a most double that with their OMG EP, which spawned TikTok trends that ranged from simple dance-challenge videos to re-creations of the camcorder aesthetic used in the 'Ditto' videos to silly memes built around the chorus to 'OMG'.

When I meet them, we're still a few months away from the summer 2023 release of the group's next mini album, and the members are just as excited about the new music as their tans are

"Everything about our new songs Is., fresh," Hamil says. "Compared to our previous releases, this new mini album defin.tely has a lot more variety to offer, in not just genre of music and dance style, but what we are striving to express and show to you." She adds: "I think we are stepping into an area of music that basn't been experimented with or tried very often before."

Amid preparations for the new release, Mail Harm, Danieue, Haerin and Hyeln are busier than ever, but they have a cute way of trying to sayour each moment. "There were times when we d bring our Polaroid camera, Just because, in the recording booth," Danielle remembers, laughing, "At the end of our recording session, I would take a selfie with the mic Just to remember that paracular recording session." (Haerir, who joined in on the fun recalls, "I also took Polaroid pictures after the recording, but it was difficult to find the right angle I remember taking more than five pictures.")

A though New Jeans have only been together officially for about a year, they spent considerably longer than that preparing and practising together before their debut — and their chemistry is comparable to industry vereins who've been togs her for years. They describe their group dynamic as a sandwich, and while the articular together before each performance, they're impressively committee to the deat of the processing their bands together before each performance, they're impressively committee to the deat of the processing their bands together before each performance.

Tessing one another, they explain that Hamil is the bread, Darweae, who is always are, ing and speaks with such enthusiasm, is a mix of crunchy and fresh root vegetables and estuce. Min, is the eggs haerin is a soft avocado; and Hyefin, who loves to crack lokes and is adored as the youngest one by her fellow members, is the ham and cheese

While these ingredients might not add up to a traditions, sandwich, that's OK with Newjeans. "We need to have them." Muiji says. "The sandwich would be acking without these."

It's attiking the degree to which Minji, Haard, Danielle, Haerh and Hyeln are in sync with one another You can see it if you waich any of their performances, and in person it seems like they can communicate anything they want to say with a glance "If we're nervous, we say that through eye contact," Minji says. Onstage interactions between the members happen to also be a key element of Newleans' signature performance style, something that first happened naturally, but then became encouraged by the group's performance director.

With each release outdoing the last, the

members have got toto a rhythm and have a routine for going into recording sessions. "It's important for us to be really familiar with the song." Hannl says. "It's more comitoritable that way. We try to listen to the missic a lot together, ratk to each other a lot." Danielle adds with a smile, "We also help each other with things like pronunciation, since there are members who are more comitoritable in certain languages."

At a time when it can seem like everyone is listening to Newjeans, who does Newjeans listen to? "I also listen to Newjeans." Minji says with a suigh. They're particularly enjertalised by remixes of their with work: "Earlier in the green room, we assend to an R&B remix of OMC," Hann says. "A few days ago, we istened to a city pop remix of 'Hype Boy'. It's so fun to see shose."

They're even more into he mis.c on their upcoming release "Although I've uved every soing we've released to date, he muse on our new mint album is exactly the type of muste I enjoy." Hanni gusties "Being able to call these soings ours makes me fee both incredibly happy and grateful."

The luture holds so much for Minj Hanni, Danjelle Haern and Hydn, and the girls themse was see hoping to exceed expectations with each new release. They get together in their practice from and rewatch past performances for growth and improvement. "It's easier to see things in retrospect," Haerin says. (Minji jok ngly englustives that they don't do this at home, as "nome is for resal.")

Looking forward to the rest of the year with much anticipation, the girls share keywords like "unknown", "emergence" and "no man's and" to describe heir journey so far. While there's a lot that Newjeans have already accomplished, there's still so much but they haven't done yet, too. "We've come a long way in a short amount of time but we alk amongst ourselves too. like We naven't done x, y or z yett" Minji says. "There are surprisingly a lot."

There are bigger things to look forward so continues, like an official New Jeans concert Although the group is attending Lodana noza this year and has performed at various other shows, they have yet to give a full show themselves. But here are also "small things, like going to an amusement park" the type of shings anyone their age might shink about

"I'm really looking forward to things like hat, and just the entire future ahead of as as a group," Min, adds. "I think it'll be so fun. Everything feels new, which makes it exciting day by day "

Output



black belt eagle scout

WHER RATHERINE PAUL thinks back to what inspired her album The Land, The Water The Sily, she thinks about Solicus' a forested path near the Saleh Sea in Birtleh Columbia and the US state of Weshington. The singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, who goes by RP and performs as Black Belf Engle Sooti, would often take likes along the trail, watching the seasons change. "That place is really special to me," away KP, 33, who grew up in the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. Black Belf Engle Sooti has won fans with introspective songs like the 2018 single. Soft stud: which was featured on the hit. FX series Reservation Dogs. The Land, The Water, The Sky feels like KP reaching out, creating a more expensive vision for her band. "This sibum is a lot about the journey back home," also save. "Moving back, and the new phase of being an adult in my homelands."

baby rose



GROWING UP IN

Washington, D.C., R&B shiper Jastitine Rose Wilson, Who's known today as Baby Rose. felt fambarras and "about the distinctive acound of her voice." Peopla would find ways to pick me apart lesking Are you, a man?" rosalls Rose. 25. "Things people sharme you about its usually what makes you poppen" the your superpower".

In recent years, as he has carved out e unique lane for herself, working with a. Cole and landing a song in Creed it. "J. Cole had a conversation with me very early on, like, belleve in you and I'm here for you," she says. "And he's reelly kept his word with that."

On her album Phrough and Through, Baby Rose sounds like an arbus, with limitless potential. As she puts its "This is divinely sligned," MARRAN JORDAN

doedhii



BEFORE BOECHII COULD Fully

step into her craft, after had to learn more about the power of being present. "I realised, "OK in this moment if now is all that exists, do I really want, obe scared right now?" asks the Florida rapper 24. "No. Butch, want to make a great song and want to have fun."

Last symmer, she dropped an EP called shaffer/fluor bife! as an introduction for those previously unaware of the Tampa spitter who plyoted from blogging into a full-time rap owner.



in the 2010s. Her personality reads the way in her music, with confident, sex-positive lynes and party-starting singles like. "Persussive and Chazy."

On this spring's Block Boy she swapped out her fervid min bherefice to line about bood love over a TuC 'No Scrubs' sample, a new direction for her and that's how she likes it. " want to just try everything in music until I get alak of it and I want to move on to something also," she says. "It could go from olessical to Afrobeats to whatever the hell. Maybe "Il make a genre. I don't know! appeare



A GENTLE BLANKET of clouds covers the sky in Plûners, Puerto Ruco, and after Villano Antillano excuses herself to take a phone call, I ask if everything as OK. "Ay no," she says with a resigned half-smille. "But I can't solve this."

The day before, in a San Juan bar around the corner from a bus stop where a family of chicken pecked withe ground, Villana—as her fans know her carefully studied he images on the camera in full glam as a team fussed over her hair fixed her clothes and powdered her face. But oday she's aid-back annumma nuckeup and a scarf on her hair. Though she doesn t say what was troubling her on that phone call, the safe-to say she's always wrestling with the kind of everyday problems that come with life on an island subjected to coloria, status. A faded poster of Afro-Puerto Rican tuminary Arturo Schomburg hangs on the wat of the cultural centre by the boardwalk, where a breeze rufflying the paint trees makes the crushing heatwave almost pleasant to be in. "Puerto Rico is a ready difficult country," she says. "A thousand things. Buest's also very magical."

Not that she's dealing with the same difficulties as she used to, exactly. The 28-year-old rapper has had a whirtwind couple of years, her dready neteoric rise shooting up into the cosmos a year ago, when she stayed her session with Bizarrap, an Argentine producer with a keen eye for new talen, whose BZRP Music Sessions are grown into a globas phenomenon. Vilkana's cutting rhymes and her immaculate flow aver Biza's trap and electro-house track gomered more than 200 million You'libe views and a life-changing amount of attention. Including from many people whose imagination did not have room for a Puerto Rican traps gir out rapping most of the men tuding hume all the money and the accolades in El Movimiento right now. A nonthrafter that five-style cause of, Vilkana was Bad Burny's special guest of the soid-out San Juan stokoff to his record-breaking Un Verano Sin Trilour "Bro., Ilke Villano's lyrica a loft," the superstar says. "I'we been listening to Villano for a long time." He remembers listening to her music before his 2020 truck-top concert in New York. "I was telling the guys, like, "This goes so hard."

This afternoon, Villans is just as brazen as she was in Bizarraph studio - smart, quask-witted, her brain working a mile a minute and gring off on multiple largents, only to be it all together time oloquent observations about life in Puerto Rico. A question about what fuels her might lead her to the isaand's colonial sadus, to the defunding of its education system, to anger about the ways she has been misunderstood, to empathy and compassion for those who have some so. She offers some sharp analysis about the tote Christian by has played in the onslaught of registation seeking to dehumanise trans people, and aments the way. Puerto

Rico feels like a theocracy in a flimsy disguise "Jesus would have been with me, though," she aids.

She has less clarity when I ask about her day-to-day — when she's not off globe-trotting for her career, that is 'She starts these sentences will have finishing and can — after figure— ther answer until she lands on a realisation her life is—wild ride now but the sense it always has been. "It never was roudine, because ready I dign't have a stable life in Puerta Rico before all this," she says. "It was surviva, and figuring it out how you could, and ... " She trails off "But I did see my triends every day."

She lights up when she talks about her friends. "It's crazy but I haven't felt even a fourth as oved, accompanied, and appreciated in my totality by a partner or a man or whatever as I have by the truly genuine and unconditiona, love my friends give me," she says. "Literally." To Villana, this is the greatest gift of being trans: friendships with women who have made her feel less alone Meeting other girls who had also felt her pain

phanomic out-rapping your faves, reinventing golden-age reggaston, and building the future she wants to see, one hot track at a time

BY VERÓNICA BAYETTI FLORES PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPH SEGARRA



These friends are more like sisters to her a loving addition to the five sisters she grew up with, "We were the problem kids," Villana recalls with delight. She's guarded when it comes to her family, having gone out at her way to keep them out of the spot ight. But despite herself, she shares Libits here and there about all the ways they have shared her. Her dad, an advocate of Puerto Ricon independence and listener of fazz and salsa; her morn, a 90s girl who played Missy Elliott and taught her about cleaning the house to Olga Tafión. ("Like any Puerto Rican who respects themselves," Villana savii.) She says she got a degree to avoid disappointing her mom, despite her own tepid feelings about university. And a mischievous smile appears on her face when she talks about the sister who was a rejections comparison in all of Villama's rebedions, who was down bad for reggaeton plonger Hector El Father in the rapturous early days of the genre-

Witnessing the golden use of reguseton the complete euphoria on the island around the breakthrough of a genre that has since proven itsel globally appealing, commercially successful, and culturally persistent for more than 20 years - is an experience that Villana. treasures. She recalls that time wistfully paining a string of legendary acts who got their start in the early DOs: Tego Calderón, Don Omar, Daddy Yankee, Wisin y Yandel jowell y Randy, Ivy Queen - a bunch of kids with rough lives and a dream who became superstars, some of whom continue to fill up arenas around the world to this day. "Truthfully, I am so grateful to have been there when these classics came out," she says. She breaks out into the opening area of a quintessential 2006 Hector El Pather track about phone sex as an alternative to a real-life liaison with a gir-who cannot escape her parents' disapproving watch. "You feet me?!" she says, aughing with delight. "I hold those memories really close to my heart."

That golden era reggaeton sound is one she tapped timo for La Sustancia X, her debut album, released aist December A masterciass in resistance, wit and flow the album coproduced by Villana herself also plays with grunge gatters and trap beats whi grunge gatters and trap beats which grunge gatters and trap beats who some experimenting with sold assthetics. "We imagine ourselves in those worlds a lot." she says. At some point, she says, she noticed that all of her queer and trans friends were into the same aniline. She realised that science fiction could serve as a way

to imagine worlds in which their existence is easier, less questionable, more permissible.

The aiblum art for La Sustancia X titis on the classic set if anime Neon Genesis Evangeiton, conjuring up futuristic queer utopias "Personally, I project myself a lot into that space, because sometimes they make you feel like Ibeing trans! is science fiction," she joxes, in these worlds of her creation, villana is maxing the future as she imagines it, playing with possibilities. "I do it as if it's already happened;" he sign, "because in some ways I've made that happen [for myself]. I've had ruoments where through heavy dissociation and a focus on my mos. Immediate inner circle, I've managed to feel wholeness. Like, I know happiness, too."

Her syrics, which juxtapose unapologetic hedonsm and total feminist revolution, force the listener to recken with her in her to a humanity - an upending of the dominant narratives about trans people And whether she

"iwant to make music about fucking around, because i feel that people like me deserve to be able to fuck around and not think"

Is rapping about the power of pleasure, as she does in "Bedontsmo" ("Todo los caminos levan a lestinativas" / El umar, el sexo, helomismo / Es poder para mi es lo mismo/Es una trampa es un espejismo"), or casually dropping fruitius analysis of the institution of marriage, as she does in "To Tengo Un Novio" ("Vida de assulo connigo, quiere tener / Pa' oficializario, quiere ponerio en papel / En la Irampa, el matrimonio / A mi me quiere someter"), she is, most importantly to her, feel ng

"For me, feelings are gasoline," she tells me. alking abou, her passionate and impulsive emotiona, landscape. "Like, if I'm not feeling anything, what am I doing?"

DESPITE THE CLEAR and purposeful poultica, stances to her music whether it is including audio of protesters saying the names of women who were murdered in Puerto Rico's femicide crisis in "Mujer", or her description of 'Cáscara de Coco' as a song about a future where feminism

triumpins. Villana is hest, and to describe herself as an activist. Activism, she tells me, is leaded with a weight she doesn't currently feel capable of carrying, and frankly, at least in her music, she does not wan, to. She did her time processing on the streets, swallowing peoper spray, getting besten, and running from Pherio Rico's notoriously brutal police force, and she needs to be once with that now.

"I want to make music about fucking around, because I feel that people like me deserve to able to fuck around and not think," she says. But it's not quate that simple. "If you would have asked me six months ago, I would have told you that I deserve to make music like everyone else," she continues, describing the ways that its men can simply hop on a track because it has a great beat, with no other purpose than having fun and sounding good. "Even though I deeply long for that, it's not my reality."

So much of Villann's story, I guther - Just like the story of her beloved Ista det recento is about constant, introducting feet and he ways to survive, even make magic, within that ther family was alfaid of her studying art, so free raying a for one semester, she switched, eventually getting a degree in International reactoris. Members of her family were the first to place hundles in her life as a trans still

"Don't stand that way, don't speak that way" but Villama knows that their wors cenarious atways stemmed from the fear of what happens to wome a like her to Puerto Rice, and that They have always adored her She is alraid of sharing too much about her family. " get ready scared," she admits.

Villans, like many people who have had to fight for dignity and survival, has had to have an Iron grip on her life. "I've always been in control, since I managed to spatch it, you leel me?" she says. "Once I took it in my hands, I haven't ker it go, and there hasn't been anyone who will say no to me."

Whether 1 is in life or in her artistic choices. Vita is has dealt with a set of circ imstances. designed to take as much agency away from het as possible, and yet she has consistently found a way Just as trans women find ways to survive in a world helibeat on killing them. lust as Puerto Ricans have manused to make the soundtrack to nightlife scenes across the globe for generations when having electricity on any given day sn't exactly guaranteed. there is powerful magic here for those who can find a way to harness it, and V llana has been perfecting al. her spells. Villana is worried, yes. And life has laught her to be afraid of so much. But she has got to a place in life where she knows a thing or two about her power

"Regardless of what they say, the records set," she says. "And the spots fit up. And the places are gonna be filled with the girls and the gays."

PRODUCE BY CAROLINA WOLK AT WORLDING DE NEU. HAR DY MAN CAROOR POURDIA, MARE ENTYGODAS DE DE JOYANA DE APPY Upper, Marchen de Reformation de Defenda de Description de Depuis de Appril along Prepudo, Sperialo Portet de Description d

elyanna

REPORE SHE HEY Coaphella's Gobi

Stage this spring.
Elyanna said a prayer with
her team, While her brother
feras accompanied her on
keyboard, the Palastinian
Chileen singer ylsuallaed
hersel' starring in a music
wideo.

Elyanna, born Bian Marjieh, is just 21 but she's already venturing (htg uncharted territory



by blending Arable, Latin, and Western sounds. Halling from Nezaeth, ahe immigrated to Southern Cesiforns with her family at 15 to pursue music. "The biggest secrifice is me moving here," she says. "Ibui] I know this is where dreams come rice."

During her Coachelle eet. Elvanna balted out for favorinted like Ana. Lehate: which has 28 million. global streams, socording to Jurningly date: or the festival's record weekend. her mantor, _набаделе Canadian singer Masser. roined her. She Incorporated matrumenta like the lable and oud, and wowed the audience with her dreamy rendition of Edith Pief's 'Le Vie en Rose sitted 'Au Kawe Janni Maak, "I want. to introduce a new culture. sound, and isnousce." she sews. That est marked a milestone: Elyenne was the first artist to perform a full set in Ambic at the festival. For the singer if was a moment that left full of promise, "Arabic music can one day be international." she adds. When a comes to art, you're free and that's how I felt," BOUTAYNA CHORRANS



annie blackman

WHEN ANNIE BLACKMAN was 13, she met Taylor Swift. It was autumn 2011, and like countless teem, she'd beer listening to Speak Avo all year "I stered the whole masso lourney as a big Taylor Swift girl," Blackman, 25, says. "There was this obtainability to fo 'Oh, my God. She got successful by lust writing her own music."

As Biyith's Spick Now tour epided, Blackman went to a fan meet and grost at Madison Square Garden. "I geve har a flesh drive with a song that I had written," she recalls. "She took me by the shoulders and looked straight into my soull and rold me to never stop writing."

Now, more than a decade later Blackman is polsed for a breakthrough as one of 2023s most distinctive young singer-congenters. Her new EP, "Bug," is a tightly composed fine-song-oveles about bad dates and breakups, with werses full of ally humbur and bittersweet truths. "Writing a good song is just sofving a puzzle," save Blackman, who writes all of her lyrics in the Nobs app on her phone. "When I feel like I've done it successfully, it's no satisfying "assort wood-curved."



soul glo

WHENTHE AGGRE-ROCK collective Soul Gla formed an 2014, frontman Perice fordion would boke about the future." I would be like, "to, lif we play Cocholle, "in goins play that shit fucking insided," he says. This year, the gag fan't landling like it used to, since the Phility bruisers sotuelly did perform at the feetival and Jordan ran around in a discreet thong, "allow people to tell me some things could nave happen," he says. "It makes it that much better when it does."

In recent years Soul Glo have grown from a down-the-middle screamo group into trailblacers of a nuserod, unpredictable hybrid of hardcore punit, metal, and hip-hop, with lyrics about overcoming depression and making series of raciem in America. Their 2022 album, Disspore Problems, firits with funky base, samptes of Rob Base and D. EZ Rock's I't Takes Two and full-on horn kines—all while never taking a break from buzz-saw guiter riffs. Rolling Stone nemed it the metal album of the year.

"If you want to start a band, you should do it." Jordan adds. "Just do it because you want to understand yourself and be understood." **xory oxow

mckinley dixon

THE TITELOF
Mokiniery Dixon
Mokiniery Dixon
Mokiniery Dixon
Mokiniery Dixon
Mokiniery Dixon
Morison,
Whorsh he calls: "the
greatest rapper even" Dixon
discovered Morrison princip
lis mather's book collection
at their horse in Annapolis,
Meryland, "I was like, "Holy
ehit, Berhuer?" Dixon, 27,
zrate order Zoom hors
Choson "Sheks wrong."

Dison began making music in Annapolisi once ha got to virginise commonwealth University, he immetsed himself the Rjohmond's DIY art scene.



"I would be nowhere without my Black and brown trans queer lolk? he says. That community, and the lessons he learned, pormeate his early releases they're full of his friends live instrumentation and wan insights on Black identity. His debut album, 2021's For My Mama and Anyone Who Looks Like Her contained dell lyrical displays like 'Make a Poer Black, where he rapa about "loyfur hymnels pecked with subliments / for distract from the fact that I'm without my kinfolk*

Onte of the most maxing moments on Beloved! Paradiae: Pazzl? in Tyler. Foewer, a pryful cole to a into friend. Her eleased it as part of his Krichen Table Sessions You Tube series, tramed in tributes to protographer Carrie Mao Weems work, an artist her's looking to amplify within his hop. "There's a lot of art that a for of this literary community doesn't know about." Dison says. "I'm going to try to be the bridge." As

Great Love

tells many stories

The out more at greatcampaign.com

Nicole Adams OBE, Former
Professional Boxer &
Olympic Gold Medallist

I'm proud that being part of the LGSTQIA+ community hat allowed me to be a role model and to represen Winning the MOBO Award for "paving

opened my eyes to how much I've actually achieved - the UK scene is to diverse, so welcoming, and it feels. Ike I'm part of something big.



Reviews

JOYFUL Comeback For Blur

Older, wiser but just as brilliant with their new album The Ballad of Darren



The Ballad of Darren

HERE WERE MOMENTS of Joy," sold Alex, armes of recording The Ballad of Barren, speaking a precent press conference hours before Blur played their first comeback show to a tiny hotnecomling crowd to Coichester

"The act that we all go off and go down our rabbit hores and come back up again and when we do get back together, we ve all rearnt something. There's always been something very special about when we play together.

ILLUSTRATION BY Jordan Carter



True to the cheese-loving bassist's word, here is an album that captures the very essence of Biar's brilliance, but injects it with a contemporary twist Damon Albarn's knack for reflecting on the mandanity of everyday life remains, but that perspective now comes from a map who real ses he is no longer the cocksure whoppersnapper of Britpop. This isn't Bur trying to bottle the ighting of their 90s highs, but instead the sound of a band that is trying to convey where they find themselves in 2023.

Sultably then, it begins on a contemplative note 'The Ballad Bees subtle drums being paired against Graham Coxon's masterfully restrained staffartines for what feels like Albarn reflecting on his storied career and anexpectedly, an overwhelming sense of ioss. "I just tooked into my tife. And all I saw was that you're not coming back," comes his downbeat opening salvo-

Su, the seriousness doesn't last for long. It's immediately followed by 'St Charles Square', which will naturally transport isteners back to 1997 with a squaiting guitur alian reminiscent of Beetiebuar, right before Albam arrives on the scene with a rousing 'Perklife'-esque cry of "Oh", It's of little surprise that the track has already become a mainstay of their correback shows this year

There's a similar charm on 'Barbaric'. which bounds along with a warm and if in flat groove that proves entirely at odds with the sadness of its lyrice: "To talk to you about what this breakup has done to me ! i have lost the feeling that I thought I'd never lose," Albarn concedes.

St. J. not a., of the a burn lands with the same impact. The restrained metodies and oblique lyries of 'Russian Strings' and 'The Everglades' feet, at times. like offcuts of Albarn's solo work. The latter, in farmess, 5 A barn's direct tribule to the late Leonard Cohen after he saw a mura, to the great man while recording early detnos in his Montreal hotel room, but this doesn't stop the track from feeling out of place.

In contrast, 'Goodbye Albert' is a masterclass in how Blur can find power n the slower morneuts - with Graham Coxon's distorted sultar allowing the song to establish distinct ethereal soundscapes

Similarly, lead single 'The Narcissist' is a bri liantly powerful ode to the dangers of anchecked egos and one of the best songs they've done in years.

For the most part, this is an album where Bur return older and wiser, but manage to retain every ounce of the charm and musicality that made them such a brilliant prospect in the first place. It's a joy to have them back, sick resur

A SLICE OF LOVE LIFE

Slick and sleek yet unsurprising are the watchwords for Rita Ora's diary-influenced new album You & I

The BEEN ALMOST five years since Rita Ora ast released an album. In that time the artist has added new hyphenates to her arready expensive job title The sour Austrain coach, Masked Shiger UK panietist, and occling as) a scien (at in blockbuster flick Pokémon Letretov Pikuchu She weers so many different hais that fiwhat is Rita Oraknown for?" has become a commob on the query





It was, of course, her music tha kickscarted her career. A string of number one has ('R.I.P', How We Do (Party), and DJ Fresh collaboration. Hot Right. Now!) pre-empted her 20t2 debut Ora, which was followed by additiona. smash singles and 2018's slick, superior follow-up album, Phoents, Farlier this year. Ora received a

BRIT Billion award, which cele wates artists that have reached over one billion UK streams. That is to say. ber musical career isn't to be sneered at

Her third album You & Lis self-described as a "diary of the last few years" Released as part of a new deal with BMG, one where Ora will own all of her own masters. it tells in Ora's own words

her "love story" Depicting "the story I wrote whilst was getting married", it spins these moments of her relationship over supersieck astrumentals and near production. Where Phoenix single 'Anywhere' was a glorious cut of wonky pop, with [biza-tlecked] contest guidang it through its brilliantly arustal hooks. You W I takes no chances. Radio-ready offerings like You Only Love Me' and 'Waiting For You' miss the bite of previous releases, and are sandwiched between sticky ballads. like the forgettable title track

The record shines when Litests the imits: Lk garage meets Gloria Gaynor on the belting 'Lion't Think Twice'. while admirably chaotic lyrics can be found on Unfeel It', which denicts the overwhelming emetions of new love as Ora admiss: "Baby how dare you mess up thy mind / I'm freaking out, I'm freuking out, I'm freaking out..." Meanwhile, the weirdly wonderful reworking of Fatboy Slim's Iconic Praise You'. titled 'Praising You', may not trump the original. but is wicked y good fun

Top often, though, the tracks wash over you as shiny pop songs that fall to draw intrigue The album is filled with universal synth riffs or clubby drops that are easily digested, yet miss the personality of previous Ora releases. White musical peers are pushing pop's boundaries, experimenting with genre or lyrical content, this third a burn sees Rita Ora playing it safe. HAMMAH MYUREA

EDINAND COOKE, DECILIES WELL SPOCHER

JUNGLE ERUPTS WITH VOLCANO

AKE ONE LISTEN to Jungle's fourth a bum and you'. immediately readse why the duc-Londoners Josh Lloyd Watson and Tom McFarland have decided to hame the record after the most volatile of patura, formations,

just like volcanoes, here is a record that proves unpredictable and liable to erupt a lany given moment. As a result, It's up there as one of the pest records Jungle have ever made

At its core, the kaletdoscopic electronic production remains, but it's far more rooted in conventional song styles than their previous releases. This means that a 70s funk/sor, spirit runs through the rousing cai-to-arms opener. Us Against the World, while Holding On returns to

he familiar dance territory lungle have occupied for so long.

I is also helped by a slew of guest stars who feel like pararal fits and not just a ham-fisted attempt to sprinkle some stardast on the record. As well as fulfilling a Bielong dream in gerting Roots Manuva to work with them on You Aut't No. Celebrity', a verse from Flatbush Zombies producer Erick The Architect shows the stammery, charming 'Candle Farm' to zip along effortiously. Similarly, the mellifuous vocals of Channel Tres on 'I've Been in Love' create the perfect audio accompaniment for your last drink poolsing as the sun begins to set.

Jungle

Voicano

CAIOLA

A slight mistire can be found ate on in 'Palm Trees', which features sughtly arituding twinkling background instrumentals, but this is lust rut picking !. we re truly honest

The fact is, Jungle have made an album that broadens the horizons of their acclaimed production skills and one that demands to be heard live. And at All Points East in London's Victoria Park later this summer you can do exactly that, mor many

DELVING DEEP WITH HOZIER

N A recent Interview with Rolling Stone LK. Hozier was adament tha, his third album heavily influenced by his discovery of Dante's Inferno during the dark days of lockdown was not a concept album.

While this might be the



case. Its clear that the darker elemen is of that epic tome have found their place on this record. 'De Selby (Part I)' delivers an iniriguing and haunting start, while rockler territory can be found on recent single 'Francesca'. But for all the impact of Jan e, there are lighter homents that really fly too. The best song on the record is the beautiful Abstract (Psychopomp). which allows the Wickjow man's powerful yocals to take off

Elsewhere, as he pleads "I'd no choice but to love you / the earth from a distance closer" on "First Light", there are visible paratiels with Thom Yorke. 'Son of Nyx', similarly, teans into ethereal instrumeniats

On the flip side, 'First Time' is rather dreary and 'Who We. Are' seems a werreach, especially in the chorus. Laxewise, 'Damage Gets Done' falls to capitalise on an appearance from Brandi Carlile and feels like a missed opportunity

The record is eclectic to the extreme, diving an and out of soul, funk, jazz, gospel and rock. Its 16 songs could have easily been a tigh intine or 10. The album cover depicting Hoxler holding a delicate flower in his mouth while the rest of his face is buried in soil sums it up: there are some fantastic songs here but you really have to discover them, an ease-suc.

BACK TO THE DANCE FLOOR

A HEN GEORG A released her second album

Seeking Thrills in January 2020, she offered up a defining siren cal, to the dance floor - only for communal jubilation to become an imposs bill y shortly afterwards.

The record channelled the hedorustic energy of the Londoner's killer live performances into a set of slick, nostalgia indebted, synth-pop tunes, offering a Joyful alternative take on modern dance music

Three years later, Euphoric has in the rest of the nighand celebrates the fact that we can flock to the dancelloor once more. It's the perfect soundtrack devoted to the small joys of pre-drinking with pals, hidden glances and brushing arms with a new partner, and walking home as the birds begin to sing.

Having created her first two records largely solo there is added star power on this record. A chance DM from in-demand producer and Vampire Weekend founding member Rostam jed to the duo



working together on Euphoric. His aish sounds are evidenbroughout, on the lithe synths for 'Give it Up For Love', or the earworm book of 'Mountain Song' adding an elemen of earthy grounding to the clubby sounds

Georgia's distinctive songwriting and powerful vocals which drew in tans on Seeking Thrills remain :00, Just drenched in ledeldoscopic new sonies. The lilting read single "it's Euphoric", a pagen to the rush of new tist and love, spins the hook over subtle production that's part Screamadelica, part Balearic club classic 'A., Night' opens with woogy Daft Purit-flecked vocals, and 'Give it Up For Love' perhaps ansurprisingly evokes

'Ray of Light' eta Madonna, given that it features producer William Orbit who worked on that record

Euphoric is a record that feets deeply on the dizzylng Friends Will Never Let You Go', Georgia affirms: "I finally let go / Now it's coming home / Finally I've accepted what I can be" the spiralling. heart-lifting instrumentals mimicking her lyrics A the about giving into love maybe, but if this is Georgia letting go, then the idea of release sounds pretty damin good, Hannah Myurra



GIRLS ON TOUR

Joy Ride takes us on a hilarious journey in this comedy about four Asian-American women on a trip to China

AUNCHY road-trip comedies are nothing new, but this one has a fresh twist T's about a group of Asian-American women on a trip to China. And it's also properly, laugh-out-loud filmly. Emily in Paris star Ashiev Park takes cen restage as Audrey, a woman who was adopted as a child by a white couple. and who doesn't feel particularly connected to her Asian roots. She's also a successful anyver who's routinely patronised by her male colleagues and boss, who assume

ficorrectly that she speaks Mandarin.

Will the promise of a potential promotion Audrey heads off to Bet ing to meet an important work contact Reasoning that she's slightly more conversant in Chinese custure. her best friend Loic (Shortcomings' Sherry Cola) comes along for the ride, bringing her quirky cousin Deadeve (Sabrina Wu), a K-pop fanatic who's noping to meet up with Kindred spirits in China Naturally, nothing goes to plan, and the tylo end up

on a craxy detour trying to find Audrey's birth morner, With plenty of sex and drugs along the way.

On paper, the bawdy harmour sounds pretty crass, hot to men for weird from Lolo's phallic art to a scene in which att accidentally coked-up soap actress finds an erotic use for a sports massager But this doesn't just barge headlong into full-on crudity: It lakes its time creating characters for its to care about and pillds initially awkward comic scenes into moments of helpiess hilarity

Joy Ride

Ashley Park Sherry Cols, Sebrine Wu. Stephanie Hau Adele un

Direct it and co-writer Adeie Lim does a terrific job of scening this jody ship, which is produced by Superbad's Seth Rogen who knows a thing or two about buddy comedies. The case do a top Job: Park and Cola are a great double act and Wu provides regular surreal interludes. Their friendship dynamic complicates considerably when a new girl joins the pack in the form of famous TV actress Rat. played by Oscar-mominee Stephanie Hau (Everything Everywhere Ad at Once)

As Low becomes lea ous of Kat's friendship with Augrey, this recalls the rivary of Kristen Wilg and Rose Byrne's characters In Brulesmalds

Although It has talown ribald identity for Ride surumons he spirit of Bridesmaids in several respects, an it celebrates the bond between women while sympa hising with their assecurities. The filip also has something to say about race, adoption, gender blas and our changing culture and it does so with a light touch and a knowing wink.

Not every minute of Joy Ride works, and not everyone will be won over by its more extreme moments. Bu, if you run with it, it's an absolute biast, and does exactly what it says on the tip Enjoy the ride 4 AUGUST ANNA BMETH



THE ART OF ROCK'N'ROLL COVERS

Squering The Circle: The Story of Hipgmosis STANBING. Aubrey 'Po' Powell. Paul McCartney Roger Weters, Robert Plant Anton Corblin

PINK FLOYD, Led Zeppelin, Peter Cabriel at Paul Metairmey are just a few of the many icons who have worked with the British design studio Hipgnosis. Pheir high-concept. album covers helped to define severa, eras of rock - and they were a suitably rebellious duo, as this fascinating documentary shows. Aubrey 'Po' Powell recads the roots of his distinctly unconventions, business with Storin Thorperson, in a time when LSD one ned minds vu also crossed divisions between friends

Po a frank and funny when talking about a securingly lawless time in the 70s, and he's joined by a series of starry talking heads, including McCartney, Roger Waters, Robert Planand Noel Gallagher. What emerges is a portrait of incredibly talented chancers whose risks mostly paid off, and whose creative work relped bands make the history books. There's also a mention for Rolling Stone magazine, apparently a key moment in Hipgnosis' rise to fame

This is the first documentary directed by Anton Corblin, and it's just as trivolving as his feature illins, which include Control. The 2007. story of joy Division. It's not necessarily exhaustive, but it's very entertaining, and of course rich in visual inspiration. is Novanna outre

TRANS LIVES THROUGH A LENS



BLACK TRANS SEX WORKERS (ell all in this revealing American documentary that won big at the Sundance Pfor Festiva Transidirector D. Smith has filmed raw, untimate interviews with Daniella Carter Dominique Silver, Koko Da Doll and Liyah Mitchell, who are all forthright and frank about the highs and lows of their occupation. The lows are many, the threat of violence and murder is a constant theme, and one hat spartietaarly polgnan following the fata, shooting of Kokn Da Doll earlier this year

In the face of cauger, the women's gallows humour wins brough-They also revel in witty recealings of encounters with clients, from the dicey to the de whift... Their observations are part cular v fascinating when it comes to the identity and behaviour of their clients, who are apparently typically macho-acting Black men who keep their desire for trans women very private. A lew of these menare prepared to to klabout it, which ope is an the scope of the documentary. But the star interviewees remain the sex workers, who are celebrated to all their deflant glory. Kokomo City is a patently low-budget film out, like its subjects, it makes the most of What it's go , and it does so with gots and hi mour a soon agramme





BLACK TO CHARM A NEW GENERATION

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, it's 20 years since tack Black blasted his way onto the big screen as a rockin' school teacher, so what better excuse to revisit this moment in cultura, history? Richard Linklater's 2003 comedy has spawned a musical, a book and a TV series, and the original is now briefly back in cinemas to celebrate its anniversary. And with its PG certificate, it's a rock'n'roll fam you can actually take your kids to.

An approarious Black stars as Dewey Finn, a recently fired guitarist who desperate for work, poses as a substitute teacher and forms a band and a bond with his young students. It's an appear, aplifting tribute to the power of music and the joy of connection and rebeldon, with amusing supporting turns from Joan Casack, Sarah Silverman and Mike White Let's stick it to the man; a sevenses anna smith

School of Rock

Jack Black, Mike White Inan Cusack Richgraf Linkigter

公会会会会

Despite for hun having a bag repfor being improched), a dity has always been presen to design. To moetlije tilla, den in experta Lee have igunched their Workwear is our son Landon' campaign It features a series of creators from the nation's capital, with dream-pop musician Lotific and ceramic sculptor Ronaldo Wiltyblire wearing the blue staff in Their immovative spaces, conveya a ciego message that displays London's diversity of sile and the relevance of Lee clothing all the way from 1889 to 2020. hydron



WHAT WE WANT AND WHAT WE NEED

Light touch

Gant are reeling fleaty this summer, champtoning separates in an apullinen libres in oright colours as well as note: tues, tverytiling hordresses, snirts rousers and struses have been made non the ighter fabric, which is perfect for Liose hazy summer days, whother you re law ig of the park her gener of a Brit to park with a been in conning yourself at he reach. The pieces are a manet Wendly choice, top. being made from European Flux cert her let This means it is GMO-free, grown without aptition frequention, and with the whole plant being used here is no waste. The concetion is fresh and breezy and perfect when the heat son dant could

Colled up

Kipling are in pink mode chanks to a collaboration to be in with Borbs. Creta Gerwig's big screen cribute to the classic doll. Eight sigs and two accessories, including bestsellers such as the Art Militte phot he Seoul sack mak as well the jewer Bins M and Avda styles, have been given a Barble makeover with Bartile togos and a Barbie det. patterned hi ing cremet apecially for the conjection Each bag also comes with a limited-eartion Barble doll keyring, with each Burble holding her very own min. Kipfing bag at's off very meta, almost like the film inception. Just don't mention Christopher Notan around Barbiel icipilng.com





Finder on the pulse British artis, and designer Samaer Blook has named Bents as helr first ever princ is sleafgn come Itani-Founder of SR A and A (OLD) WALLS, Ross a rending his creative perspective to Bestir new products and packaging with a focus on aux almabie materials and premium Holades, after previously collaborating wit the reand brough A-COLD-WALL* The creative role is a great fit for the arrier who are constantly working on fushion-forward designs and fun collaborations. It's muck to our ears beatsby/re.com

Arcade fire

Pac Man, the itemic areade game from the 80s, has over given the Sequenced 2 treat nervial new for the Sequenced 2 treat nervial new for the Sequenced 2 treat nervial new for the Color for the Sequenced 2 treat nervial new for the Color for the Sequenced 2 treatment of the Man and the ghost family on menswear womenswear at the kidnwester computer with computer style graphics of Fruits and retro-computer game fest Particular standards are the dening places with areade game figures, as well as observed in scalles, attorts, cropped Tathriss and even boxers as its awarming trupias. We're ready to eas, up the whose collection. Available online and at Daquared 2 stores.





125 years of world travel

ICE FND GERMAN LUGGAGE BROOM REMINING are colebis in their 125th anniversary into year, and e mark their global journey, they ic embarking on a replaced the world with heir Self 1898 exhibition, which showeases built frered be re-sares and alsonic moments they have created along the way

Tokyo, japan was the period starting point for R move a world tour (they re in their Harry Styles and Beyoncé era). The streets of 1 s fashion districts. Short ya, Nezara na Câr za, are a ready fined with incredibly well-dresses people sporting their personal Rimows cross-nody bags and even cabi reases as a cool accessory to their immaculate ou vis. Tokyo locals pu. the world in shape, where youngs this reet style. The fashion glitterat turned out for the exhibition's opening right with in englione, stars such as k-Pop ido. Rowoon, from the danc SF9, in attendance, complete with his adoring fans waiting loyally for him outside despite the to by season downpour

iside. The Ser 1898 extration affers an interactive and cinema is experience that embodies creativity with wonderland-like chora hald(spiays, the licing a deconstructed Rimowa cabin case suspended in midair so you can really see the detail that goes into their beloved bag and he iconic grooves and adorn a leir cases. There are Wes Adderson-esque cine halfc sets and tableaus to marvel at, and plenty of interesting details of







CASE CLOSED (left, Rowson at the launch; (below) Every Caso Tolls A

Rimowa's history to pore over. For Gen 2, there's pienty of Instagrammable content and Tik Tokkable set ups, such as an interactive juggage-sticker wall, and even the Pierre Cadault' cabin case from Emily in Paris which caused traffic to Ripsowa's website to skyrocket when it was on the eta. Notifix snow. There are also nods, o Rimowa. products appearing to films, including the briefcase rom 2011 a Missiom Impossible - Ghost Protocol

Rarely seen privately owned cases from the ikes of Parti Smith and universally adored former tennis player Roger Federer are on display too. Elsewhere, tailored bespoke Tems such as the Poker Attaché with premium poker set, the alcase for Straidvarius vialities demonstrate the luxury luggage company's range and attention to detail. Finally, precess from tomowa's megalest aborations. with brands like Dior and O f White highligh, the label's impovation and knock for partnering with the most elec ric fashion names Rimowa are known for heir graftspanish p, so it sino surprise here's so much detail. and originality on show in the exhibition. It is analy a feast for the eyes.

Selt 1808 will be in NYC from 8-17 September 2023. China at the end of 2023, and Cologue, Germany, in spring 2024, rimenessom





ART OF TRAVIL (far foft) Laaking to The Future display: (left) D. Bisok Coffee's регеопа C000

EAVOURTTE/THINGS



From the Rimowa erchive: a case specially designed for carrying viny!



Talwanese singer Jolin Teal's personal case



An instrument case used by the Beethquan Orchester Bonn



Bellie Ellish's travel assentials revealed her personal case



MADE PROVINDED BY CLARRESPORTING HIS WARRY & COLHIRSE



ROAD TEST

They think it's all over, and it is now. Bar the shouting. Good news, though, as Jaguar's F-Type sports car reaches the end of the line. there is a lot of V8-based shouting...



not over-keen on anything definitively final, Cup Finals aside (though, as a West Ham fan, I've seen only two won in 43 years, so even that's hard to be sure about). 'm great at helfos but dreadful at goodbyes,

cried all the way through 'Your Song' at Elton's lest ever London parformance when realised the soundtrack of my life. was truly at the end of the Yellow Brick Road, and become dreadfully morose most New Year's Eyes. What's to celebrate about something being over? That it existed in

the first place, is the response from our friends at Jaquar. confronting me with the all-new but soonto-be-gone Jaquar F Type 75. Marking three-quarters of a century of Jaguar sports cars it also denotes the end of the line for Jaguar V& petrol power and for the foreseeable future anyway - both the F-Type itself and a sports der format. bearing the famed reaper insignia. Come 2024, we'll see the first of a new range. of an-electric, notably elevated Jaguara, h four-senter Gran Turismo guise targeting Bantley and Aston Martin, and so this diminutive but raucous two-seater is to be done and dusted.

t is, for crying out roud, the final ⊿aguar √8 sports car And maybe the final aguar sports car

My own fragility around such things notwithstanding.



QUICK STATS POWER. 575PS TORQUE 516LB/FT O-GOMPH 3.5 SECS TOPSPEED 186MPH 60) 239G/KM PRICE £103.075

I take in the low. lithe, fluid forms that marked former Jaquar design chief lan Callum's high watermark, sat before me in the South of France sunshine outside the Maybourne Riviere hotel, sister to London's Claridge's, The F-Type Convertible is enrobed in a dark Giola Green created uniquely for this concluding chapter, which is beautifully complemented by striking tan leather in the interior.

The more elegant Coupé is in the mattest of matt black finishes, the evening light thereby

extinguished along its flanks to render its three-dimensional form a silhouette. It's fabulous, albeit an extra £10k of paint

finish fabulous. Before climbing aboard either, though, I first kneel at the alter of their predecessors sat close by - a 1959 Jaguar XK120 and the first E-Type roadster, as seen on the 1961 Geneva Motor Show stand, are precious artefacts lifted from Jaguar's own heritage collection, And by 'kneel at the altar', I mean 'hop aboard for a run along the corniche from Menton towards Cap Ferrat in the old-

stagers, for a (literal and figurative) surset moment from the bucket list', I return for dinner dewy-eved. Like I said, I'm just not good at adleus.

Having awoken to an uninterrupted Mediterranean view in green and blue, it's go time. First up is the F-Type 75 convertible, open beneath azure skies, and since Monaco is on the doorstep. why wouldn't you head off to lap the most femous street circuit in the world? Twice or three times. With the aports exhaust valves open, crackling and buzzing at every lift off. Absolutely thrilling, even at 10 per cent of the speeds the F1 boys manage. You'd imagine the locals to be tired of it all, but not remotely - I spy hundreds of camera phones held gloft as we fire by.

Then to the Darth Vader's helmet that is our flat black F-Type R 75 Coupé. It looks

and feels resauringly expensive, befitting of the six-figure price tog that adorns the top-flight R model packing 575 horses. There's a monster within, though at first acquaintance It's reassuringly accessible, too. The cabin is snug but accommodating, smalling of fine leather, and the controls are light and positive. But away into the hills and the car is alive around and beneath you. Growls become rumbles. rumbles turn to roars and at full chat there's a ballow that starts up front and exits the tail at a level that would trouble the gods. It's utterly glorious, And we'll miss it when it's gone.

Which is where I came in. I get it. I know, understand and completely accept the need for zero-emissions transport. I've been driving an all-electric Jaguar I-Pace of my own these past

three years, charged on renewables. But as a kid - a car enthusiast even then - I had a zeroemissions Jag in the form of a blue, E-Type pedal oar, And while my brother and I loved it dearly, what we both ultimately wanted was the repl cer - a noisy one, the one that smelled of leather, oil and petrol, And for two glorious apring days in Jaquar's company, I got to live that childhood dream and then some.

For Jaguar, It's the end of an era. Though new-gen Jag details are scant, there's no doubt a revolution is coming.

But look at the cars pictured here. Imagine them alive with all of the golour, the sound and the tactility of an interaction with a mechanical masterpiaca. It's a hard thing to let go of, and I may not yet be ready. I'm not so good at goodbyes. **CARREN STYLES**



Pelle Almqvist

The Hives' lead singer on whether rock'n'roll keeps you buzzing, on-stage antics and why hornets don't faze him

You recently said that rock'n'rolf is a "perpetual teanager". Does rock'n'roll keep you young? Yeah, in a way I think it does. Since we toured with the Rolling Stones. I've seen them differently because they're slightly older than my parents, but they do look younger. And Iggy Pop is about the same age as my dad, I think. There's definitely something about rock'n'roll being the fountain of youth. As long as you don't die at 27, you can make it for quite a while. Our shows involve a lot of cardio, so maybe that's what it is! It's also important to not have a mindnumbing job that you hate. That would [age you by] 10 extra years.

Do you think rock'n'roll will ever die?

Well, rock'n'roll has the distinction of being the only musical form that people talk about dying all the time. Like, no one's ever said chamber pop is dead or Dixieland lazz is dead. There are a lot of other musical forms that are way more dead. than rock'n'roll. There was a feeling that was there before they even called it rock'n'roll. I think it's, like, a basic human arge that's somewhere in between something sexual, something destructive and something euphoric. I think that feeling was there with teenagers in the fucking Roman times and in the Stone Agel

The new album is called The Death of Randy Fitzsimmons. Are you scered of dying?

I think about it way too little because I feel invincible and at a certain point, I'm gonna realise that I'm gonna die soon and fall apart. I should probably think about it more, but then again, you only have so many hours in the day. Whatever I'm doing now is not coming with terms with it; just pretending it won't happen. That's the way most of us deal with it. My grandmother died recently at 96. and in the last year of her life, I think she realised that no one else was there anymore, I think it's a weird realisation, but one better than thinking about it through your teenage years and adulthood. What's the most chaotic gig

you've ever played? There have been too many to mention. I guess falling off stage, landing on my head and getting concussion in Switzerland was one thing, then another time where I jumped off the drum kit and destroyed the lighting rig so the whole stage was black. Oh my God, there was the time too when we played in Spain with the whole festival connected to ane power outlet. Something was always giving out. First, the PA gave out, and then the back line, and then the lighting rig for bands across the festival. You also see all kinds of weird stuff to the crowd, too.

In there any advice you'd give to your younger self?

I guess it wouldn't have been the end of the world if we had taken a short break for a while.



"There's definitely something about rock'n'roll being the fountain of youth"

We've been at it constantly and never had a proper break. There have been years when we do fewer shows and stuff, but we're never actually taking a break and thinking about the other things we could be doing with our lives. I mean, the pandemic kind of did that to us anyway and made us realise how much we missed being in the house. So that was good. But I think we could have done that earlier.

I don't know what to call it, I guess it's a work ethic, but we have a sense of duty in our band where everybody wants to do everything all the time. You know, it wouldn't have been the worst

thing in the world if we had done a bit less of some things.

Other than that, there's a whole bunch of people we shouldn't have hired and there's some people we should have hired!

Finally, you're the frontman of The Hives. But how much would we have to pay you to get up close with some hornets without the necessary protection?

I mean, I'm pretty rich, but I'd do It for a million pounds. I'm kind of Into it, actually, Does Rolling Stone UK have a million pounds? I think it'd be guite cool, and money well spent from you guys! I think it'd be VETV COOL MICK REILY





Inspired by its spa town heritage and enjoyed around the world, Slingsby premium gin is crafted with pure spring water and real fruits to create the finest, award-winning British gin. With initial floral hints of violet, followed by notes of rich blackberry jam, Slingsby's Blackberry Gin is a bright, fruity and refreshing spirit.

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50ml Slingsby Blackberry Gin 25ml freshly squeezed lemon Juice 12.5ml sugar syrup 12.5ml Creme de Mure

Add the Blackberry Gin, lemon julce and sugar syrup to a cocktail shaker and shake with ice until chilled. Strain into an old fashion rocks glass filled with croshed ice. Drizzle the Creme de Mure over the ice and garnish with a lemon wheel and fresh blackberries.

